



Tenth sitting

Monday, 13 June 2011, 10.05 a.m.

President: Mr Hossu

**REPORTS OF THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE GOVERNING
BODY AND OF THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL: DISCUSSION
(CONT.)**

Original French: The PRESIDENT

We will continue the general discussion on the Reports of the Chairperson of the Governing Body and of the Director-General.

Original Portuguese: Ms TAIPO (Minister of Labour, Mozambique)

We commend the Director-General and his team for doing an excellent job of promoting the objectives of this Organization and its member States. Our assessment, and especially in my country, is that the ILO has greatly helped many countries, societies and citizens to obtain decent working conditions that respect the fundamental rights and freedoms at work.

Mozambique is living proof of the benefits of constant social dialogue. We have established, by consensus, a system of minimum wages for all sectors; the Government has adopted measures to mitigate the impact of the international financial and economic crisis, and designed and implemented policies and strategies to combat urban poverty and in particular to create jobs for young people and women.

The Director-General's Report indicates very clearly that a well-designed system of social security benefits is an essential element in the promotion of productive employment, gender equality, social cohesion and optimum economic growth.

These efforts are taking place within the legal framework which has been established in our country and which is promoting social peace by various means. These means include the Labour Advisory Committee, labour arbitration and mediation centres, and the Labour Inspectorate, all of which are tools for social dialogue.

In that spirit, last November, we launched, with the involvement of the social partners and civil society, a campaign for social dialogue and the culture of work. It was launched by the President of Mozambique, Armando Emilio Guebuza, and we are already reaping the benefits.

Our countries find inspiration in the ILO for their efforts to improve their practices in the world of work. Mozambique, for example, is developing its Decent Work Country Programme in order to improve its social security system and ensure that the

fundamental principles and rights at work are respected.

In this historic session of the Conference, we are moved by the fact that we are discussing a subject that is so important to many of our countries. I am referring to the proposed Convention on decent work for domestic workers. This is something which will bring a human face to this very vital work. Mozambique, since 2008, has had a body of regulations on this area of work, and the results have been encouraging.

The challenges before us in our efforts to promote social justice in a world of globalization oblige us to redouble our efforts to establish efficient and effective labour administrations.

At the same time, we increasingly see a trend towards the growth of the informal economy, with precarious working conditions which do not offer a very prosperous future for those who are employed in that sector. Some firms do not respect labour legislation, which makes the lives of workers increasingly difficult. Here we see the very important role that can be played by effective labour inspection. Without it, the worksite or workplace will be nothing but a place of injustice and disorder. And labour inspection is not just about sanctions; in many cases, inspection can play an educative role.

We reiterate our commitment to social dialogue because it is only through social dialogue that we can achieve our goals of development and social justice.

We count upon the support of the ILO in the development of our programmes, particularly when it comes to labour administration, labour inspection, gender issues, and the fight against child labour and discrimination based on HIV/AIDS.

In conclusion, we reaffirm our full support for the ILO's budget proposals for 2012–13 and thank the ILO for all it has done for domestic workers and the cause of decent work.

Ms RAITT (Minister of Labour, Canada)

As the Director-General states in his Report, called *A new era of social justice*, the ILO will play a unique role in the coming years to ensure that the Decent Work Agenda remains a priority around the world.

This is the first time that I have had the honour of addressing the International Labour Conference and I am pleased to begin by announcing Canada's ratification of three ILO Conventions: the Forced Labour Convention, 1930 (No. 29), the Promotional Framework for Occupational Safety and Health

Convention, 2006 (No. 187), and the Tripartite Consultation (International Labour Standards) Convention, 1976 (No. 144). This truly reflects Canada's commitment to international labour standards.

As our economies emerge from the recession, we must continue to focus our efforts on creating and preserving decent jobs, and this includes social protection and active labour market policies that will assist those who become or remain unemployed. One of the top priorities of the Government of Canada is having a workforce that is flexible and also capable of successfully navigating the challenges presented by tomorrow's economy. The widely endorsed ILO Global Jobs Pact outlines a range of policy options that can be adapted at the national level to provide for a jobs-focused recovery. In Canada, our well-established social security system allowed us to respond quickly to the recent economic crisis.

In 2009, the Government of Canada implemented our Economic Action Plan, which included many initiatives consistent with the Global Jobs Pact. This Plan helped us recover quickly from the recession and I am pleased to report that full-time employment in Canada has, as of April 2011, surpassed its pre-recession October 2008 level.

The ILO Social Justice Declaration identifies what must be done by the ILO to help Members meet the objectives of the Decent Work Agenda in a globalized world. This includes reforming its own governance structures and procedures in order to realize efficiencies to be better able to help its member States. The Declaration also calls on the ILO to streamline its technical cooperation and expert advice and help Members promote the strategic objectives within the framework of either bilateral or multilateral agreements. The Government of Canada recognizes the importance of this point by addressing labour issues in the context of trade liberalization. To this end, Canada signs labour cooperation agreements with its free trade partners. These agreements include commitments to promote fundamental principles and rights at work and to provide protection for workers with respect to health and safety and labour standards.

I understand the Conference Committee on Domestic Workers has completed its efforts and will propose the adoption of a new Convention and Recommendation. The nature of domestic work and the conditions under which it is performed make domestic workers particularly vulnerable to exploitation, so it truly is our collective duty to ensure that these new international instruments contribute to improving the working conditions of domestic workers, who are primarily women, girls and migrant workers.

Canada also welcomes the outcomes of the discussion on labour administration and labour inspection. As Minister of Labour I am aware of how vital an effective labour administration and inspection system is for realizing the goal of decent work. Sharing good practices among ILO tripartite constituents, especially, will help us as we face the challenges of limited resources and the new demands of today's world of work. This is an area where workplace partners can and must play a strong role by supporting governments in their prevention and enforcement activities.

Finally, I wish to underline the Government of Canada's strong support for strengthening the ILO's standard-setting role through the review of interna-

tional labour standards. This review should be accompanied by technical assistance to aid member States in implementing Conventions. As the Conference enters its second century, we can look back on the Organization's accomplishments in the promotion of decent work, and to addressing the many challenges before us.

The ILO will require a vision and strong leadership with an Organization that is both efficient and effective. Canada looks forward to continuing to support the ILO in these efforts.

Original Arabic: Mr ENNACEUR (Minister of Social Affairs, Tunisia)

I should like first to address my congratulations to the Director-General for his Report and his objective analysis of the negative effects of economic and financial policies following globalization in the world of work and human development.

The Report emphasizes, and I am pleased to say this, that there is an unequal distribution of the fruits of growth and that the ensuing frustration among the people inevitably gives rise to social and political instability. This is amply confirmed by the outcome of the revolution of 14 January 2011 in Tunisia.

Tunisia has undergone a popular revolution of a salutary nature against tyranny, nepotism and corruption – a revolution to promote dignity, freedom, democracy and social justice.

It is true that we continue to face a number of challenges and a number of negative effects of the social and economic situation, but despite all that, because of the joint efforts of all national forces including political parties and associations, we are determined to come through this difficult phase and to ensure success in the democratic transition towards conditions of acceptable security and give concrete form to the objectives of the revolution.

The transitional Government has constructed an economic and social programme based on employment, the recovery of the economy and of its financing, regional development and social action.

In that framework, the Government has taken a number of urgent decisions to face up to the worsening social situation. They are intended primarily to combat poverty, precarious employment and the various forms of exclusion and marginalization, notably by improving the situation of a significant number of workers in various sectors and broadening assistance to the needy. This will allow them access to loans to set up projects and to basic social protection benefits.

Second, we intend to set up a specific programme aimed at unemployed young people, as well as those with qualifications, so as to promote their integration into economic activities and the labour market.

And third, we plan to preserve social peace and jobs by a series of exceptional financial and fiscal measures ensuring that part of employers' contributions go to the social security system so as to promote commercial or agricultural enterprises that suffered during the revolution.

The Government is committed to strengthening social dialogue and negotiations have accordingly begun between the social partners on a number of financial and regulatory issues. There is agreement on a wage increase in both the public and the private sector. Following consultation with the social

partners minimum levels of pay in industry and agriculture have been significantly increased.

I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate the workers, unions and employers on the sense of responsibility they showed during the negotiations on social conditions and improving salaries, despite the exceptional circumstances in the country.

The success of the transitional phase and the achievement of many of the objectives of the revolution require a national consensus on broad political, economic, social and cultural guidelines. It also calls for urgent support from our friends in other countries and influential international organizations.

History shows that democratic transition usually goes hand-in-hand with a slowdown in economic growth. Indeed, the revolution has had significant repercussions on our country, especially because of the pressure stemming from the influx of an estimated 450,000 refugees of many nationalities on the border with Libya.

I should like to thank all the humanitarian international organizations and donor countries for their support to Tunisia in these difficult times. I would also like to welcome the call from a number of economists in the G8 countries for an economic and financial programme to assist Tunisia. The principle of such a programme was decided upon at the recent summit in France in which Tunisia, for the first time, had the honour of taking part.

Mr KHARGE (*Minister of Labour and Employment, India*)

We welcome the Director-General's Report, *A new era of social justice*, at this historic 100th Session of the Conference. The Report provides a good opportunity for all member States of the ILO to deliberate on the need for a strong social dimension to globalization in achieving improved and fair outcomes, as enshrined in the Decent Work Agenda.

Ensuring social sustainability and inclusive growth is a universal challenge today. Rapid growth and urbanization have contributed to increased inequalities and imbalances. Improving public service deliveries, particularly education and health, better targeting of subsidies, ensuring employment opportunities and economic support for women and marginalized sections of society are all needed to ensure the social sustainability of growth.

India is also working towards implementing the commitment towards social progress, economic growth and increased engagement with nations around the world in the most effective and determined manner. We have pursued a strategy of seeking inclusive growth at home and inclusive globalization internationally.

We have enacted legislation guaranteeing the right to employment and the right to education. We now propose to introduce legislation guaranteeing our citizens the right to food. A superstructure of development has been built on this foundation of investment in human capabilities. Our policies have aimed to empower weaker sections of our society, socially, educationally and economically.

We have been reasonably successful in our efforts to generate adequate employment opportunities for the vast majority of informal workers in rural areas through the implementation of the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act. In response to the global economic slowdown, we undertook a massive fiscal stimulus programme that helped maintain reasonable growth.

Our Government has launched a national programme for skills development and technical training. A new national skills development initiative has been launched to empower all individuals through improved skills and knowledge to ensure India's competitiveness in the global market. India has set a target of creating 500 million skilled jobs by 2022. Special protection is an investment which enhances the productivity of workers in the long run.

India has launched a massive campaign to provide basic health-care facilities for workers in the unorganized sector who comprise 94 per cent of the workforce in India. Through its ambitious and successfully running flagship programme, *Rahstriya Swasthya Bima Yojana* (national health insurance scheme), social security funds have been set up and the Unorganised Workers' Social Security Act 2008 has been adopted for informal sector workers.

We endorse the concept of a Social Protection Floor, but each country should decide the level of its Social Protection Floor. A uniform social security floor cannot be prescribed for all countries and there should not be any fixed time lines. The Social Protection Floor should be closely linked to the country's financial resources, size of the informal sector, employment strategy and other social policies.

In India we are moving from "scheme-based" to "rights-based" social security entitlements.

India has great faith in the principles and practices of the ILO. The time has now come for all member States to pledge their support to ensure policy coherence for the social dimension of globalization with decent work as the overriding policy objective.

Ms COLLINS (*Parliamentary Secretary, School Education and Workplace Relations, Australia*)

It is my great pleasure to address the International Labour Conference at this, its historic 100th Session. The last time I attended the Conference was as a member of the Australian delegation to its 81st Session, in 1994. That session was also significant in that it marked the 75th anniversary of the founding of the ILO and the 50th anniversary of the Declaration of Philadelphia, which widened the mandate of the ILO to cover matters such as unemployment and poverty alleviation.

Over the course of its history, the ILO has seen many changes in the international, social and political landscape, which has fundamentally shaped the world of work. For nearly 100 years, this forum has brought together governments, employers and workers to discuss the issues critical to the lives of working people. At that 1994 Conference, I recall the historic and moving resolution rescinding the ILO Declaration on Action against Apartheid, as the Conference welcomed South Africa back to the ILO after a 30-year absence. This year, it is North Africa that has been undergoing historic political changes, and again the ILO has a role to play in assisting people of North Africa to obtain the employment, dignity and rights that they have demanded.

As a founding Member, Australia has had a long and productive relationship with the ILO, but this relationship was tested throughout the term of the previous Australian Government, whose Work Choices system was the subject of repeated criticism from the ILO's advisory bodies. Work Choices represented a combination of a decade of efforts by a Conservative Government to introduce an ideol-

ogy-inspired and extreme framework for regulating Australia's workplaces.

I recall attending a hearing of the Committee on the Application of Standards in 1999 when the Committee noted serious concerns in relation to Australia's workplace relations system. In particular, those raised by the Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations in relation to Australia's obligations under the Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining Convention, 1949 (No. 98), stating that the workplace relations legislation gave primacy to individuals over collective relations. As a strong advocate for Australian workers' rights to join a union and bargain collectively, it was indeed a disconcerting and disappointing time.

The situation for Australian workers became worse when, in 2005, the Government took control of both houses of our Parliament and used its new powers to introduce what became known as "Work Choices". The ILO's Committee of Experts continued to highlight its concerns in relation to Convention No. 98 and to the Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention, 1948 (No. 87). As I am sure many are aware, at the following 2007 election, Australians overwhelmingly rejected Work Choices and the erosion of their rights and protection as workers, and elected a Labour Government that promised to reintroduce fairness into Australia's workplace relations system.

It gives me great pleasure to represent a Labour Government that, two years ago, implemented the Fair Work Act. This historic reform, which was developed in full consultation with our social partners, ushered in a new era of cooperation in industrial relations in Australia and re-established a fair and balanced workplace relations system that should give us all cause for celebration.

The Government has been encouraged that the introduction of the new Fair Work system has been received favourably by the Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations. It is pleasing to note that, for the first time since 2001, the Committee has not expressed concerns about Australia's compliance with Conventions Nos 87 and 98.

I share the Committee's satisfaction that collective bargaining at the enterprise level is now at the heart of our new workplace relations system and that statutory individual agreements, as well as employer Greenfield agreements, can no longer be made.

It was especially heartening to reflect on the observation made by the Director-General in his Report, *A new era of social justice*, that countries such as Austria and Australia, which recently reinforced labour market institutions, have weathered the global crisis much better than other advanced economies. We have certainly been through a turbulent period, but we are proud to have our system back on track. This is a significant achievement not just for our Government but for Australian workers and their families who have voted so overwhelmingly to restore vital protection for workers and, in so doing, to uphold the fundamental Conventions of the ILO.

It is my hope that, through my representation as a member of Australia's government executive here today and with concrete progress towards the implementation of international labour standards, Aus-

tralia's standing as a strong and active Member of the ILO will be further reinstated.

Australia will ratify four ILO Conventions this year. Among these is the Part-Time Work Convention, 1994 (No. 175), which sets minimum standards for the treatment of part-time workers. This is particularly gratifying, as this was the Convention on which I worked.

Let me conclude, briefly, with highlighting the importance of Australia's role with the ILO in the Asia-Pacific region. Australia has now become a significant donor to the ILO, and indeed one of the largest donors to the Better Work Programme. We hope this will reinforce our ongoing standing within the ILO and our participation in the international environment.

Original Russian: Mr SHMAKOV (Worker, Russian Federation)

The 100th Session of the Conference is taking place at a very difficult period for the world economy.

We are in need of a new era of social justice based on sustainable development. The main threat for workers today comes from the attempts of business, as we emerge from the global crisis, to distort labour relations and deprive workers of the protection acquired over recent decades.

As an example: one of Russia's biggest employers has proposed a review of the Labour Code to introduce a 60-hour week. Such moves to favour business with low wages and other concessions will not, however, bring about a modernization of technology and production, and indeed cannot do so under the laws of the market.

The crisis has shown clearly what deregulation of financial and trade markets leads to. It was intended to give impetus to the development of the social sphere in the interests of fair globalization. However, this goal is becoming less and less achievable. The global crisis has become a serious test for social systems. Many countries are today reviewing their policy in this sphere and trying to introduce new methods of social protection. The main value of the ILO, which has confirmed its importance in crisis conditions, lies in tripartism and the implementation of its international instruments. The idea of tripartism proclaimed by the ILO continues to play an important role in the current situation. An example of tripartism is the anti-crisis plan adopted by the Russian Federation, which has incorporated many proposals put forward by trade unions to mitigate the main harmful consequences of the crisis for workers.

The ILO Conventions and Recommendations in force constitute a genuine international labour code on which national labour codes and a system of social protection for workers should be based. There are now, unfortunately, attempts to shift national laws away from the provisions of these Conventions and Recommendations. Indeed there are calls now for a review and downgrading of the ILO's role in labour relations and for a revision of its fundamental Conventions.

In the discussion about ILO reform we are seeing proposals to depart from classical tripartism involving governments, employers and workers and dilute it by involving a broader range of NGOs in the ILO's activities. Attempts to cut funding for the ILO's activities are detrimental to real social partnership. There is a good rule in medicine – "above all, do no harm". This suggests that we must ap-

proach various models of reform with caution. Better stick to something tried and tested than adopt something that happens to be fashionable at the moment.

The ILO agenda needs to include the major strategic issues, and the international trade union movement knows exactly what those are.

First of all, *employment policy*. Until we get back to pre-crisis levels, there will be no question of surmounting the crisis. The Global Jobs Pact offers such an opportunity but the ILO but must do all in its power to ensure it is put into practice.

This concerns above all *youth employment*. We must not overlook the fact that recent events in Tunisia, Egypt and other countries in the region occurred because those able to work, many of them well educated, despaired of finding decent work to support themselves and their families.

Much is said about *equality for women* in the labour market, but actually little has been achieved in that area.

An important place in the ILO agenda must be accorded to *domestic work*. This is one of the main themes of this session. Tens of millions of people are involved in this area, predominantly women and children. They are among the most vulnerable and disenfranchised groups of workers. We wholeheartedly welcome the prospect of adopting a Convention and a Recommendation on this subject.

The principle of work as a means of combating poverty can promote the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. Ratification of the ILO fundamental Conventions by all the G20 countries would certainly speed up that process.

One hundred sessions of the Conference – that is a worthy measure of the viability of an international organization, its usefulness in the world community, and the enduring nature of its traditions. The ILO came through the Second World War, the difficult post-war years, and “the cold war”. It must remain true to its ideals and, in this age of globalization, give active support for social dialogue.

Original Chinese: Mr WANG (Employer, China)

We are gathered at the 100th Session of the International Labour Conference since the establishment of the ILO in 1919. For all the past years, guided by its Constitution and mandate, enshrined in the Declaration of Philadelphia, and under its unique tripartite mechanism, the ILO has played an important role in promoting employment, protecting workers' rights and interests, stabilizing labour relations and promoting social justice and a fairer globalization in close collaboration with governments and employers' and workers' organizations in its member States.

We are delighted to see the Report submitted by the Director-General to the Conference. In the Report he calls for a new era of social justice based on a more efficient growth path. The Report discusses challenges brought by inefficient growth patterns in the past, including high unemployment rates, income imbalance, weak social protection, etc. It calls for coordinated actions by member States to achieve social justice through implementing international labour standards and the Global Jobs Pact. It also urges all member States to maintain consistent macroeconomic policies and progressive fiscal policies, to put the financial system at the service of the real economy, to promote the sustainable development of enterprises and to create more jobs. We appreci-

ate the notion of an efficient growth path put forward by the Director-General and we think that only through close international cooperation can it be realized.

China is well known to be the largest developing country in the world. After 30 years' reform and opening up, we have made remarkable progress in economic and social development. However, in the meantime, we are mindful of the fact that we have a large population, a weak economic foundation and a low per capita GDP. Thus, we need to work very hard to achieve our objectives for development. This year marks the implementation of the 12th five-year plan for economic and social development in China. The plan follows a clear theme of scientific development and focuses on accelerating transformation of economic growth patterns. It aims to accelerate economic restructuring, deepen reform and opening up, ensure and improve people's well-being and promote long-term, steady and rapid economic development, social harmony and stability. The plan sets out two objectives, namely raising residents' income in sync with economic growth, and increasing workers' salaries in sync with productivity growth. It also lays down the objectives of establishing a sound tripartite mechanism for coordinating labour relations and ensuring that they are regulated, orderly, fair, reasonable, mutually beneficial, harmonious and stable. These objectives will come to the fore as enterprises expand their production and operation activities.

We have come to the historic moment of the 100th Session of the International Labour Conference and the second decade of the twenty-first century. At this historic moment, we keenly feel the importance of economic growth and sustainable development to the eradication of poverty and the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals. Enterprises are the main players of economic growth and the foundation for building a harmonious society. The China Enterprise Confederation, acting as an employers' organization and business association in China, will make continued efforts to promote sustained economic growth, create employment, protect workers' rights and interests, foster harmonious labour relations, promote social fairness and justice, and realize common growth for both workers and enterprises.

It requires enormous efforts from us to achieve social justice and find a more efficient growth pattern. Enterprises and entrepreneurs are an important driving force behind economic and social development. We would like to appeal to the international community and the ILO to give more attention and support to entrepreneurs and to provide favourable conditions for the sustainable development of enterprises. China Enterprise Confederation will, as we always do, further strengthen communication and cooperation with the ILO and employers' organizations in other countries to better serve enterprises and entrepreneurs and create a better future.

Original Russian: Mr SAFONOV (Government, Russian Federation)

The Report of Mr Juan Somavia, *A new era of social justice*, touches upon the basic aspects of efforts to improve quality of life by defining decent work as a goal which we must achieve at the international level.

The Russian Federation supports the efforts of the International Labour Organization to develop a new

growth model, based on extending decent work, full employment, and fundamental rights and strengthening social dialogue.

Combined efforts are needed between the ILO's member States to provide effective methods in the world of work based on social justice as the right response in the context of globalization of the economy.

As regards the current economic situation of the Russian Federation, the calls for continued measures to revive the economy in the post-crisis period by boosting competitiveness and labour productivity. The Government considered that priorities and key strategies should include investment in human capital and measures to enhance social protection, and especially initiatives to regulate the labour market and measures to bring about a sustainable increase in wages.

State labour market policy in 2009–10 was crucial in mitigating the consequence of the crisis for citizens and for the economy. Effective measures were taken to meet the State's obligations to develop its citizens' potential. These were crucial elements in the anti-crisis programme.

In addition to permanent measures that already existed, special additional measures adopted in 2010 to promote employment included initiatives to reduce labour market tensions in all regions. These additional measures enabled us to avert mass layoffs, maintain the human resource base and reduce overall registered unemployment, which stood in 2010 at around 1.77 million people, as opposed to over 2 million in 2009. At the end of 2010, unemployment was at its pre-crisis level, or about 7 per cent of the active population.

In 2011, 27 billion roubles were allocated from the federal budget under a range of regional programmes to reduce labour market tension.

Social and economic developments in recent years have shown that the system of state administration is effective and can respond to developments and maintain a degree of stability despite the negative effects of the crisis.

Real money income of the population grew between 2009 and 2010 by 4.3 per cent. Growth in the crisis year 2009 was 2.3 per cent compared to 2008.

Average nominal monthly wages had increased by 11.8 per cent between 2009 and 2010, and in real terms by 4.6 per cent. The minimum wage was increased by 6.5 per cent as of 1 June 2011.

With regard to occupational safety and health, reforms of the OSH system aimed to improve the OSH administration and provide incentives to employers to improve safety and health and move to a more preventive approach. Between 2006 and 2010, occupational accidents causing a loss of at least one work day had fallen by 1.5-fold and fatal accidents by 1.4-fold. The priority in government action is to protect life and ensure safety, and this requires a transition from a system based on reacting to events to a more preventive approach based on comprehensive preventive measures. Coordinated action is taken between the Government, workers' and employers' organizations.

As regards the development of social partnership, in December 2010, the 11th general agreement was signed for the period 2011–13 between the major national trade union federations and employers' organizations. Priority is given to measures to improve the quality of life for workers and their fami-

lies and to improve social protection and social stability.

As regards the development of social partnership, some 58 federal-level branch agreements were in effect by the beginning of 2011. Our intention is to go on introducing best international practice in labour relations, including by ratifying the relevant ILO Conventions. The Russian Federation last year ratified four ILO Conventions.

The aim of our reforms is to achieve greater prosperity for our citizens, reducing inequalities, enhancing social stability, social justice and decent work, which are consonant with the goals of the ILO.

Ms POLASKI (*Government, United States*)

It is a pleasure for me to represent Secretary Hilda Solis and the United States Government at this 100th Session of the International Labour Conference.

As the Director-General noted in his Report, the world economy has started to grow again following the swift and coordinated efforts by our governments to address the global financial crisis.

From the very beginning of our administration, President Obama has focused on creating jobs. He took immediate steps with our Congress in 2009 to stop the financial meltdown and to restore economic growth, passing a large fiscal stimulus package which included spending increases aimed at creating jobs.

Unemployment benefits were extended in duration and to cover more types of unemployed workers. This played a pivotal role in shoring up demand for goods and services while helping workers and their households.

Last December, we added momentum to the recovery by cutting payroll taxes, extending tax credits and unemployment benefits again, and creating new incentives to stimulate businesses to invest in research and hiring.

Over the past 15 months we have added millions of private sector jobs, but our economy is not yet creating all the jobs we need. We need to do more.

We face the equally important task of helping to rebuild the global economy in a way that both creates growth and shares it broadly. We cannot simply go back to where we were before the crisis. The global economy was growing in ways that were precarious and unbalanced, both within and across countries.

One important step was taken when the Employment and Labour Ministers of the G20 countries met last year and reached consensus on a broad range of policies designed to rebalance economic growth and produce the good jobs that all of our citizens need.

The Ministers recommended a range of active labour market policies to match workers with jobs and to improve their training and skills, and they agreed on the importance of strong social safety nets to keep workers and families from falling into poverty and to help them regain their footing and find new opportunities.

At the Conference this week, our countries agreed to make further progress on social protection systems that help us weather economic storms and make our societies more inclusive.

We are delighted that France, as the current President of the G20, has decided to convene the Labour and Employment Ministers again in September to

take this programme forward through concrete and ambitious steps.

The United States has also been very active on the bilateral level to advance good labour policies and address worker needs. We have formal labour dialogues with China and with Viet Nam and we are establishing labour cooperation mechanisms and Memorandums of Understanding with several countries, including Argentina, Brazil and India. These mechanisms allow us to examine our common challenges, hear our strategies and experience and exchange technical expertise to help us move forward together.

The United States has also long recognized that the expansion of global trade creates both opportunities and vulnerabilities for workers. In response, the United States pioneered the inclusion of commitments to respect worker rights in all of our free trade agreements. These commitments can help ensure that trade is based on comparative advantage rather than on the suppression of workers' fundamental rights, and they can help to channel the benefits of trade to workers and working families in all trading partners.

The United States has also worked to improve workers' well-being around the globe, through technical assistance projects aimed at improving labour inspection systems, labour laws and the protection of children from the worst forms of child labour.

We also strongly support the ILO Better Work Programme, which is a model of how to combine better labour conditions with faster economic development and job growth. In Better Work Programme countries, the ILO monitors factories for compliance with national labour laws and fundamental rights and posts the results on the Internet. Buyers can direct their orders to the factories that comply with labour laws and away from factories that do not.

We funded the first Better Work Programme in Cambodia in 2000 and, over the following ten years, jobs in the garment sector grew from 80,000 to 350,000. We have launched such programmes now in Haiti, Indonesia, Jordan, Lesotho, Nicaragua and Viet Nam. These are just a few of the practical strategies that can be used to ensure that work is a reliable path out of poverty for all of our people.

By sharing our ideas, experience and efforts, we can build the kind of sustainable and inclusive economies that we want for all of our countries. Thank you and we look forward to the conclusion of what has already been a highly productive International Labour Conference this week.

Ms KATSELI (Minister of Labour and Social Security, Greece)

The global financial crisis of 2007 has been contagious. It has rapidly transformed into a crisis of liquidity, solvency and jobs in many countries, thereby exacerbating unemployment, inequalities and political and social tensions. It is becoming increasingly apparent that we need to collectively address, in an orderly manner, global macroeconomic imbalances, to regulate effectively global financial markets and to share equitably among developed and developing countries the benefits and costs of globalization. Likewise, we need to understand more fully the growing interdependence of financial markets, and the real and the social economy, as well as the implications of such interdependence for the design and implementation of policies.

The Director-General's insightful call for multilateral social coherence is more timely now than ever. Nowhere is this more pressing today than in my own country, Greece, which has been implementing an ambitious fiscal retrenchment and competitiveness-enhancing programme since last year, with sizeable support from a number of countries.

Mitigating further rises in unemployment and maintaining social cohesion and political stability are the preconditions for success. Likewise, it is necessary to ensure policy coherence at the European and global levels, to address effectively unprecedented systemic solvency risks, including speculative attacks on hard currencies and sovereign bonds, to safeguard financial stability and preserve the orderly management of debt and exchange rates.

The ILO and all relevant international organizations, including social partners, cannot, and should not, go back to "business as usual". Tripartite dialogue should be extended to involve the financial community more directly, since financial and productive capital do not always share similar aims and objectives. The ILO's extensive experience of social dialogue can prove invaluable in promoting an open and constructive debate on what, under present circumstances, constitutes a path of sustainable growth and social coherence that would safeguard the basic social rights of employment and decent living, while maintaining competitiveness, market innovation and entrepreneurship.

Four priorities require our urgent attention. First, we need to encourage and facilitate the effective coordination and greater effectiveness of fiscal, labour market and social security policies. The choice of expenditures to be cut, and taxes to be raised, critically affects both growth and employment potential. Similarly, the kind of employment policies and social protection schemes we implement have an impact on both productivity and fiscal performance. Therefore, while fiscal measures should not exacerbate inequality and the unequal sharing of burdens, unemployment benefits and social transfer schemes should not create incentives for undeclared work and tax evasion.

The second priority is to actively promote employment and improve labour inspection. Labour market flexibility and deregulation, while necessary, do not automatically guarantee either work for all or acceptable health and safety standards. Well-targeted, active labour market policies, including social work and social entrepreneurship, proper incentives and effective labour inspection mechanisms can help to support, in innovative ways, the preservation and creation of decent jobs.

The third priority is to provide adequate liquidity for small-scale firms to maintain and expand jobs. Adequate reform and effective oversight of the banking sector, the provision of microcredit to viable small-scale businesses, the creation of social economy funds and the introduction of social bonds could prove invaluable instruments, in order to guarantee liquidity and keep viable enterprises running.

Last, but not least, we need to pursue an active social dialogue on policy innovation and governance reform.

Globalization, in both product and financial markets, is giving rise to new challenges, which require more coherent and flexible approaches to policy-making, as well as reforms of the post-Bretton Woods governance architecture. Safeguarding the

systemic stability of the global economic system needs to go hand-in-hand with promoting growth and development policies based on equity, rights and decent jobs.

There is an urgent need for leaders to look critically at the past and provide solutions for the future – solutions which would strengthen the legitimacy of democratic political processes, create employment and promote social cohesion, so that people do not feel that they are “too small to matter”.

Original Portuguese: Mr GOMES (Minister for the Civil Service, Labour and State Modernization, Guinea-Bissau)

At this moment in time, all the actors in the world of work must combine their efforts to tackle the existing international labour issues. This will require the adoption of harmonized structural policies, designed to provide global solutions to a global problem in an increasingly globalized world.

Future, work and dignity! The three apices of a triangle that represent an unavoidable challenge, that of recognizing that the world, labour processes and the world of work have changed over the last few years. New forms of technology have appeared and the existing workforce does not always meet the needs of the current market. University education has become increasingly popular but there are ever fewer experts in technology, workers for whom there is always a need.

Future, work and dignity! How can we reconcile these three points with the shift in the paradigm of the world of work? Stable employment or precariousness?

Around two years ago, a certain gentleman said “We must all reflect together on how we can have a globalization which takes into account the issue of inequality”, adding that this was one of the main problems that would arise in the future. He believed it was essential that decent work should be held up as a central value of a new model of globalization, along with the protection of the environment. He went on to say that “Globalization has been operating in an ethical vacuum. Indeed, it overvalued markets, undervalued the State and devalued the dignity of work.” I am referring to the words of Juan Somavia, Director-General of the International Labour Organization, speaking with the visionary lucidity to which we have become accustomed.

Guinea-Bissau is on the west coast of Africa and has a population of approximately 1.5 million people. It is ranked 171st in terms of progress concerning the Millennium Development Goals, and is 165th on the Index of Economic Freedom (both rankings out of 179 countries). It is a relatively young nation, which gained its independence in 1974. At first, progress was made in terms of development, with encouraging results being achieved up until 1997. In that year, a civil war broke out which devastated the country. Since then, recovery has been slow and marked by political instability and upheavals. However, with the arrival in power of the current Government in 2008, the country again began to make progress. Advances have been made at various levels: the reform of public administration; the modernization of public finances; the building of bridges and roads; and the new Labour Code, as well as a recently-approved law on human trafficking and many other measures.

Growth for Guinea-Bissau in the next year is forecast to be about 4.5 per cent of GDP. This will make it possible for the country to attain the levels

of growth of the member states of the Western African Economic and Monetary Union (UEMOA), which are around 3 per cent of GDP.

In Guinea-Bissau, strenuous efforts are being made at the local and global level to build national and international harmony and make work a true tool for the construction of a better future, capable of restoring hope to all the country’s citizens.

Work belongs to all and, if there is not enough of it, cracks can begin to appear in society. The absence or lack of work can lead to the breakdown of families and societies and its causes are the same the world over: corruption; lack of resources; poor organization and interference. These factors require State intervention and, above all, a new approach to labour and legal relations.

The principle of human dignity must be made a reality within the framework of labour and legal relations if people are to be treated decently at work. Refusal to apply this principle in labour relations means the loss of society’s greatest ever achievement, human dignity.

The world is currently experiencing one of the worst ever global financial crises since the 1930s. All areas have been affected, but the employment sector, and stable employment in particular, has suffered particularly badly.

What we are seeing now is a period of large-scale unemployment and precarious employment.

Coming back to my initial question: stable employment or precariousness? The response must lie in the difficult process of harmonizing opposing positions, the gap between which is continuously being widened by the “ethical vacuum” in which globalization operates.

Guinea-Bissau has reached a point at which it is ready for change, hope and change, in order to ensure that there is a State capable of creating the conditions necessary for the emergence of a competitive economy which generates employment and promotes a society based on solidarity. A State which stands as a solid and strong productive system. A State which develops based on peace, social justice, regional development, technology and respect for the environment, with a Government which uses good governance as a strategic choice for the development and consolidation of democracy. We want a country where people love to live.

Original Farsi: Mr SHEIKHOLESLAMI (Minister of Labour and Social Affairs, Islamic Republic of Iran)

The world today is facing new issues in many different areas which international organizations and governments need to tackle responsibly. Social justice and the need to combat discrimination have become doubly important today. But the limitations of international action and economic greed are the cause of deepening poverty, the shrinking of social safety nets and the poor performance of regional markets.

In many developing countries this ongoing situation has undermined the productivity and operation of SMEs and has caused a significant rise in unemployment. The ILO can certainly help us to find tripartite solutions and to create a framework that is more conducive to social justice.

In the Islamic Republic of Iran we have taken up the slogan of social justice, combating discrimination, elevating dignity, reducing the gap between social classes and ensuring decent standards of living. We have worked hard, and one of our top pri-

orities is to provide more social services and free education and vocational training, with equal opportunities for every citizen in the country.

The establishment of a National Skills Organization, which was set up to enhance professional skills and to support SMEs, people working at home and rural workers, includes a master plan covering all these areas.

This is only a part of what the Islamic Republic of Iran is currently engaged in. It is expanding its umbrella so as to cover all sections of society, especially the least favoured sections.

For example, we are offering better services to seasonal workers and female heads of households, providing them with cheap housing, credit cards, food stamps and better health cover and health clinics around the country. This, among other activities, is how we are striving towards social justice.

However, the people and Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran will never forget the actions of the arrogant oppressors who have introduced unfair sanctions against my country to reduce the country's rate of progress. Since the victory of the Islamic revolution we have worked hard. Trusting in God the Almighty and despite the hostility raged against us, we shall reach the peaks of success one by one.

In the present global conditions, the unjust and oppressive measures employed by the occupiers against the people of Palestine and the atrocities they have visited upon this land have been brought to the attention of the ILO. Well, the good name and moral standing of the Organization is facing a litmus test. We must come to the aid of these oppressed people. The world is awaiting the outcome of this 100th Session of the Conference, and we need to take decisive measures and a firm stand if we are to come through this litmus test with our heads held high.

Original Arabic: Mr JRAD (Worker, Tunisia)

It is historic because issues of great importance are being discussed this year which have profound implications for the lives of workers and peoples throughout the world, who expect a great deal from the ILO and hope that it will play its part in helping them to achieve their ambitions for peace based on equality, social justice and freedom.

This was affirmed by the Director-General in his opening address when he urgently called for a new era of social justice and economic growth based on sustainable development, in response to the increasing uncertainties in the world of work.

We fully agree with that approach, and we are convinced that respect for international labour laws and fundamental rights at work is the best way of making progress towards social justice and combating the negative effects of the current economic crisis which has increased precarious employment, social conflict and discrimination of all kinds.

As I address you today at this Conference, I have come from my country, Tunisia, where the first spark of the revolution for justice, dignity and freedom was ignited last December, bringing down the dictatorship and corruption that had afflicted Tunisians for more than two decades.

The success of our people's peaceful revolution has encouraged other people in the Arab region to overcome their fear, to refuse to resign themselves to the status quo and to rise up against repressive and despotic regimes in the Middle East and North

Africa, in order to build a new future based on peace, democracy and the elimination of all forms of corruption, nepotism and discrimination so as to establish the rule of law and institutions in a society based on justice and equality.

What distinguishes the Arab revolution from other modern revolutions is that they have succeeded in linking freedom and democracy, on the one hand, and the demand for decent work for young people and social justice, while combating corruption, on the other hand.

Our peoples have understood that you cannot separate political justice and social justice, and neither has primacy over the other, because democracy has two aspects: one relates to fundamental freedoms and the right to freedom of expression and freedom of association, while the other is inherent in the very concept of social democracy, such as the right to work, social protection, free medical care and education, and absolute equality.

The Tunisian General Union of Labour played a fundamental part in the successful outcome of the peaceful Tunisian revolution, in particular with regard to demonstrations and sit-ins, the organization of strikes and the expression of the slogans and demands of the revolution. Our Confederation would not have been able to do that if, during the long years of persecution and dictatorship, we had not kept our independence and made sacrifices so as to preserve our freedom of decision and commitment to defending the interests of our workers and the aspirations of our people. We are determined to carry on this task, to defend the revolution and to work for the achievement of its objectives.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Mr Juan Somavia, Director-General of the International Labour Office. He sided with our people and took the interests of Tunisian workers to heart since the beginning of the revolution and has continued to do so after the revolution.

Today we hope that the ILO, the international trade union movement and all the forces of freedom and democracy worldwide will continue to support the Tunisian revolution, to help it achieve its goals and to prevent it from being taken over and used for other ends.

Protection of the revolution in Tunisia and Egypt and the advent of democracy in the Arab world today are fundamentally linked to the success of the Tunisian and Egyptian revolutions and the assistance they receive to meet the demands for which their peoples revolted: the guarantee of public and individual rights, the realization of the principles of decent work and progress towards social justice.

Justice and freedom are essential to peace and stability in the world. We cannot achieve peace and stability in the world unless we put an end to the last bastion of colonialism in the world by enabling the Palestinian people to achieve self-determination, regain its land, and build an independent State, with the holy city of Al-Quds as its capital. Hence the importance of the Report of the Director-General on the situation of the Palestinian and Arab workers in the occupied territories. We are convinced that the elimination of the settlements, recognition of the right of return and respect for international law in this regard are the way to just, lasting and comprehensive peace in the region.

As the Director-General suggests in his Report, this Conference provides a good opportunity to take stock and to analyse the role that the ILO can play in the current international context.

The Director-General's Report makes reference to the negative impact of this crisis, which has affected my country in particular. Spain has gone from generating 20 per cent of the total number of new jobs in the European Union, to seeing its own level of unemployment exceed the same figure of 20 per cent. This has particularly affected young people, and there is a risk that an entire generation will be marginalized.

In this context, we should recall and reaffirm the fundamental function of the ILO, particularly as a tripartite body that creates a unique space for dialogue and contributes to finding solutions.

Business, and we can never say this too often, is how wealth, jobs and prosperity are created. We must therefore ensure that enterprises benefit from a favourable social climate, with less interventionism and with fair recognition of their labours.

I am fully convinced that, by adopting structural reforms to improve the competitiveness of enterprises, we will find the means to overcome this crisis and to get back on the path of sustainable growth and job creation.

One essential area for reform is collective bargaining. Collective bargaining should be an instrument for creating enterprises and, through the productivity and competitiveness of those enterprises, creating jobs.

Collective negotiation in Spain has not been immune to the severe economic crisis of recent years. Even so, it continues to play a very important role for economic activity in our country, given that it regulates the working conditions of a large proportion of salaried workers. Nonetheless, the rules of collective bargaining go back to the late 1970s, reflecting an economic context which has changed greatly in the meantime.

We must therefore take determined steps towards a system of collective bargaining that is more useful, more effective and better adapted to the needs of competitiveness and sustaining and generating employment.

Collective bargaining priorities should focus on improving internal flexibility in the day-to-day life of companies, particularly with regard to working time and job functions, and the ongoing review of both.

Collective bargaining needs to be renewed and rethought, keeping in mind that purpose and whether it is necessary to allow some provisions on working conditions or wages to be suspended in order to protect business activity and jobs.

Finally, the structure of collective bargaining should always be based on the needs of enterprise because, today, there is no justification for having collective bargaining at so many different levels, which serves to make the process more expensive and threatens its survival.

These were the premises underlying our position in the negotiations held over the last four months with the trade unions, which did not result in agreement, prompting the Government of Spain to approve, last Friday, a royal legislative decree on the reform of collective bargaining, which is quite

disappointing for business organizations and, to an extent, for Spanish society as a whole.

But it will definitely not stop us from continuing to defend the crucial importance of social dialogue, which in Spain has made it possible to create a climate of social stability over recent years and also to introduce important changes to the regulatory framework.

But we must insist on the need for reform in areas such as the hiring and firing of workers in the labour market. These issues are currently the subject of tripartite negotiation in Spain, which ought to bring us into line with countries around us.

Lastly, I would like to recall that social dialogue in Spain has had important results in terms of increasing the viability and sustainability of our social protection system in the medium and long term: the Social and Economic Agreement, signed on 2 February 2011, covers, *inter alia*, one very important issue, namely the reform of the pensions system.

I would like to conclude my comments by requesting ILO collaboration in creating the right climate for enterprise creation and development. For our part, you can count on our strong support and our willingness to help to meet the objectives of this Organization.

Original Arabic: Mr HUMAIDAN (Minister of Labour, Bahrain)

The Director-General was right to choose social justice as the theme of his Report submitted to the Conference, in the light of the economic and financial crisis that began three years ago, and which is continuing to have negative repercussions on the labour market throughout the world. Indeed, many workers have lost their jobs, and are having to cope with unemployment, poverty, moral and social suffering – increasing the need to guarantee social justice to these marginalized members of society.

The Kingdom of Bahrain is aware of the importance of social justice and its effects on the development of social peace. It has therefore taken steps to ensure that justice is one of the principles on which the country's economic vision is based, that is: the application of equal treatment for all in accordance with the law; the implementation of international labour standards; the provision of assistance for those in need, by providing them with adequate training and social security; and measures to combat discrimination.

The Kingdom of Bahrain has taken care to incorporate the principle of social justice into its law and practice; a case in point is the Unemployment Insurance Act, which sets out to protect workers during this difficult period, while guaranteeing the right to a decent life.

The Kingdom of Bahrain has now recovered after passing through a difficult period – and this is thanks to the wisdom of its leaders, its united people, the support of its brother States and its intrinsic values.

The Government has also taken a number of measures to restore normality in terms of the rule of law and institutional governance. For instance, His Majesty the King has called for a national dialogue to begin on 1 July, which will speed up reforms and fulfil the hopes of the Bahraini people for peace, justice, development and progress.

The Kingdom of Bahrain has succeeded in overcoming the consequences of the last crisis, despite the damage caused to the national economy, economic enterprises and the interests of labour and the

workers. It has provided direct assistance to industrial enterprises, by exempting them from certain taxes and taking other measures. Furthermore, 140 million dinars have been allocated to support struggling enterprises so that they might re-establish stability and continue to grow, increase their competitiveness and provide decent work to citizens.

The Prime Minister also decided to establish a high-level committee to examine matters related to the dismissal of workers – and this has been one of the most significant measures taken in this area. As a result of this, a statement was issued several days to the effect that a group of 571 dismissed workers were to be reintegrated as they had been unfairly made redundant. A number of measures will be taken in the very near future to guarantee the reintegration of the other dismissed workers.

The Kingdom of Bahrain is fully committed to continuing with its reform process and strengthening the rule of law and its institutions, and to respect freedom of expression, freedom of association, trade union freedoms and human rights, in line with international treaties and Conventions. Through various initiatives it will continue to organize the labour market – guaranteeing the fundamental rights of workers and all citizens, including migrants, without any discrimination.

The Kingdom of Bahrain would like to conclude by denouncing Israeli practices against workers in Palestine and in the occupied Arab territories, and believe that the Palestinian people have the right to establish their independent and sovereign State, which should be internationally recognized.

Mr KIM (*Employer, Republic of Korea*)

The Director-General's Report, *A new era of social justice*, is very meaningful because it shows us a roadmap of how the ILO will develop and change in the future. The roadmap should be redefined continuously in accordance with the ever-changing environment of the labour market. On this point, I would like to make a few comments.

First, the Report rightly emphasizes that wages should keep pace with productivity growth. The Office should develop and provide an adequate productivity-based wage system for member States. Wages not keeping pace with productivity is a concern, but excessive wages surpassing productivity growth is also a problem.

In the Republic of Korea wages shot up during its rapid economic growth. The high wage trend since persisted, even as growth became sluggish. Excessive wage increases outstripping productivity growth weakened competitiveness and even became a major cause of restructuring during the economic recession. To reduce this imbalance between wages and productivity the current seniority-based wage scheme should be shifted into a productivity-based one.

Second, the Report says that a flexible labour market can lead to inefficient growth, resulting in greater job precariousness and high unemployment, and suggests that strong labour institutions are needed. However, this view fails to reflect fully more balanced ideas about the market economy. Strong labour institutions and inflexible labour markets would only reduce the total volume of employment. Even though employment growth driven by economic growth is slowing down, the focus of job creation policies should still be placed on raising potential economic growth.

Third, the Report highlights only the negative aspects of globalization, arguing that globalization has intensified inequalities and imbalances and widened the gap between rich and poor. Poverty and inequality have various causes, including political unrest, poor governance, corruption and a bleak investment environment. So it cannot be conclusively said that globalization is the first and foremost culprit. The world is now moving towards a flat economy, as many emerging countries have achieved economic growth through globalization and thus created more jobs while others countries have lost jobs because of globalization.

The Report's emphasis on the pains of globalization means that it reflects the narrow view of only a few countries. Globalization may increase income inequality and the wealth gap somewhat within regions, but it cannot be denied that growth is also a product of globalization. Therefore, we should seek ways to minimize the pains and maximize the gains of globalization.

Fourth, the Report presents a new efficient growth model citing decent jobs, strong social protection, reinvestment in education and so on. However, social security policies should be designed so as to contribute to the workers' ability to work, by way of productive social security. We should encourage workers' active participation in the labour market through the efficient operation of training programmes and employment services. This will improve workers' productivity, thereby enabling them to enjoy the benefits of social security, such as decent work and income security.

Nobody can dispute the fact that our ultimate goal is decent work. However, at a time when the absolute number of jobs is insufficient, emphasizing only the quality of jobs could intensify social polarization. In this situation, policy priority should be given to expanding employment opportunities. The best social welfare is a job. Furthermore, it is time to ponder whether we should focus only on decent work for workers inside the labour market while ignoring the unemployment problems facing those outside, and whether decent work should be used as an excuse to benefit only those currently employed. The concept of social justice should be defined in the context of employment.

Original French: Ms SABO (Minister of the Public Services and Labour, Niger)

As the global economic system undergoes a crisis caused by a period of globalization which proved unable to strike the balances required for the preservation of social peace among our peoples, it is more urgent than ever to implement new strategies for social and economic development based on the principle of social justice, which for every citizen of the world means the guarantee of decent living conditions.

This period has revealed the limits of globalization in its current form and that alerts us all to the pressing need to find fitting and lasting responses to the serious inequalities which that globalization caused.

We Africans face constantly the repercussions of structural problems, and therefore we identify fully with the message of the Director-General in his Report and we subscribe to his analysis.

We also harbour the sincere hope that the time has now come for the entire international community to finally hear the ILO's call for a fair form of global-

ization. The Decent Work Agenda and the tripartite system have paved the way to better, more beneficial growth for our States, to more peace, equality and rights, and I can say that Africa, today, is more committed than ever to contributing to that progress. That we can see from the first Decent Work Symposium, which was held in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, in December 2009, where a road plan was developed for the development of human resources by means of professional training, the promotion of an open social dialogue, the promotion of social protection for vulnerable individuals, the protection of SMEs and the fight against emerging diseases.

In particular, we stand firmly convinced that the ILO's Decent Work Agenda is an indispensable means of ensuring a level of growth that will prevent inequalities and thereby ensure real social progress, the progress to which the world's peoples aspire.

Consequently, we remain committed to following this path which has been laid out by the ILO. By way of example, I cite our national plans and the programme of the President, His Excellency Issoufou Mahamadou, whereby economic recovery and social promotion will provide a basis for further development over the five years of the President's term. We plan to raise 6,000 billion CFA through an improved tax system, more efficient public spending and a substantial increase in external resources.

This will be allocated as follows: 900 billion CFA will be earmarked for agriculture and livestock farming; 600 billion CFA for hydraulic engineering in urban, rural and cattle-raising areas; 600 billion CFA for infrastructure and energy projects; 1,500 billion CFA for education; and 600 billion CFA for health.

These measures will be taken in conjunction with the national employment programme and will allow us to create at least 50,000 jobs and introduce a minimum level of social protection.

As part of this process, in July 2010 Niger started developing its Decent Work Country Programme and today it is its dearest wish that it should be able to do much more in this context, over and above the active revival of technical cooperation activities in the country.

The technical matters on today's agenda are particularly interesting because they are an integral component of the vision which the Director-General has expounded in his Report. So, too, will the conclusion of the committees be of great value for us as we implement our decent work programmes.

The Director-General, through his Report, has set out the path which we must follow. As governments, employers and workers, each playing their allotted role, we must bring our own efforts to bear so as to strengthen the ILO's ability to carry out its worthy and inspiring mission and to give us cause for hope, at a time when stability and social peace are threatened.

Before I conclude, allow me to reiterate my country's desire, as it emerges from a period of political transition, to cooperate more actively with the ILO, particularly in terms of social dialogue, the fight against child labour, the promotion of jobs, social protection and capacity building for labour administration and labour inspection.

I also take this opportunity to assure you that, as a newly elected member of the ILO Governing Body, my country will spare no effort in striving to ensure

that its contribution to that body be as efficient as possible in working towards our common goals. I thank all the member States gathered here for the trust which they have placed in my country, Niger.

Mr RUKORO (*Employer, Namibia*)

We all talk about decent work, sustainable jobs and job creation, but we seldom actually look seriously at what is required to create those sustainable jobs.

Worldwide, the numbers of unemployed are rising. In several European countries, the retirement age is being increased in an effort to reduce the annual financial burden on pension schemes.

Jobs are becoming scarce across the globe, but the world's population continues to increase. Not so many years ago, the dream of the developed world was "early retirement, with sufficient pension and savings to enjoy more years of leisure and pleasure", but the reality today is that this is just not happening. More and more, one hears comments from professional people that they cannot really afford to retire, so they keep working as long as they can.

All the above make the creation of work more and more complicated.

Where and how are we going to find the millions of jobs that we need?

In the developed world, and even in some developing countries, it is considered demeaning to do menial work. The history of countries importing labour to do their dirty work is hundreds of years old, and will continue just as long as those from countries that have virtually nothing have a desperate need to earn something.

We need to create work in the countries of origin, not in the countries of destination of economic refugees. The question is "how?"

First, we need to encourage our governments to ensure that labour legislation is not too restrictive, but at the same time protect the rights of the workers. I quote from the discussion on sustainable enterprises from the 96th Session of this body: "The government has to play the role of regulator, provider, facilitator, to create an environment where business can grow."

Recent media reports indicate opposing ideologies. For example, Swaziland introducing new tax laws in an attempt to bolster national revenue, but which will lead to the closure of countless businesses, while Angola announces new incentives for attracting business and investment, and thus job creation. In too many countries, especially those that need employment, in attempting to overprotect the worker, governments unwittingly create more unemployment.

We once again have to call upon our governments to forego short-term political expediency and look at short-, medium- and long-term economic sense. It takes courage to take hard short-term critical and unpopular decisions when the long-term benefits are too vague for "the man in the street" to comprehend fully. A tendency for all of mankind is to look for gratification now, rather than for a vague promise of something better at an undefined future date. But if we want long-term jobs, hard decisions are required now.

Second, efficiency of the enterprise and the workers: in southern Africa, there is a tendency to import labour, whether from neighbouring countries or from further afield, because it is cheaper or, more importantly, more productive. It makes no sense

whatsoever to import cheap labour, even more productive labour, and at the same time increase your own country's unemployment. It is the duty of workers, employers and governments to make local labour more cost-effective.

Third, workers and trade unions should refrain from constant and unrealistic demands for wage and benefit increases. Too often it is clear that the workers and their representatives are more worried about the currently employed than trying to encourage business development and its related job creation.

Fourth, innovation by the entrepreneur: too often, organizations do things the way they have always been done. Namibia has established an Innovation Centre, where "outside-of-the-box" ideas are actively encouraged.

Often, the old way of doing something has out-lived its effectiveness, and it is time to move on and accept modern techniques.

If we do not address the issue of unemployment – and I remind you of my earlier statement that governments have the responsibility to create that conducive environment – we can expect similar ructions to those of North Africa.

We, as employers, are ready to act but, without that initiative from governments, we cannot create a single job.

Original Spanish: Ms CORTES AGUILAR (Minister of Work and Labour Development, Panama)

I should like to take the floor and congratulate the International Labour Organization, on behalf of the Government and people of Panama, as it celebrates the 100th Session of the International Labour Conference, under the slogan of *Building a future with decent work*.

Panama is aware of its status as primarily a service economy which offers the international community a strategic platform and added value in terms of investment. We therefore try to ensure that any bilateral or multilateral international commercial agreements that we sign up to are in the interests of our workers and support the creation of decent work, as well as contributing to progress and social justice in a changing world.

The economy of Panama is largely a product of the initiatives and leadership of the President of the Republic, Mr Ricardo Martinelli, and is enjoying sustainable growth, with public and private investment that will amount to more than US\$21 billion by 2014, making Panama one of the most prosperous and stable economies in Latin America. The Government plan for the period up to 2014 includes investments of a little over US\$13 billion, without taking into account the US\$5.2 billion which the Panama Canal Authority has earmarked for the expansion of the Canal between 2007 and 2014.

Against that background, with conditions that are very favourable to considerable economic growth, boosted by a major plan involving social investment and funding for infrastructure, demand for workers in Panama is greater than anywhere else in the whole of Central America. The unemployment rate stands at less than six per cent.

Employment promotion must be accompanied by social protection measures, that is to say, social security and protection for workers, which must be sustainable and appropriate to local circumstances.

The Government of Panama has therefore taken unprecedented measures to regularize the status of immigrants and to allow them to obtain work per-

mits, in line with international agreements governing the protection of immigrant workers. Relevant labour legislation will come into force on 20 June of this year, affecting more than 15,000 workers who currently are in the country but do not have papers. Such progress can be made only against a background of full democracy of the kind that exists in Panama.

The 2011 Report of the Committee on the Application of Standards examined the reports submitted by the Government of Panama, and, as usual, expressed its satisfaction with the progress made regarding that application of this Convention.

Legislation has been introduced since 2010 which is in line with the observations and recommendations made by the Committee on Freedom of Association, the Committee of Experts and also the Committee on the Application of Standards concerning the Government of Panama. However, despite the efforts of the Government, I was invited to provide information to the Committee on the Application of Standards of the ILO.

Panama understands that the Committee on the Application of Standards is a body within the framework of which constructive dialogue and exchanges take place between the social partners and governments.

On the other hand, some of the social partners take the famous list bearing the names of Governments which have been invited to provide information to the ILO and present it as a blacklist which marks out the Governments included on it as being guilty of violating the freedom of association. This list is sometimes used to oppose the efforts of the Governments concerned, and can damage their international reputations. In Panama, the workers used all the means of social communication at their disposal to spread the message that the trade agreement between the United States and Panama was at risk because Panama was on the so-called blacklist.

In conclusion, since there is not much time, I would simply like to say that the Report of the Director-General, *A new era of social justice*, presented to this International Labour Conference, highlights income inequalities, which have worsened in most countries, with the gap between the highest incomes and average incomes becoming ever wider.

On behalf of the Government of Panama, I would like to thank all those Governments who supported our candidacy as a substitute member and for allowing us to continue to contribute to the work of the Governing Body for the period 2011–14.

Original Arabic: Mr GHARIANI (Employer, Tunisia)

I also have the pleasure to thank the Director-General, Mr Juan Somavia, and we would like to tell you how much we appreciate his Reports, *Equality at work: The continuing challenge*, *The situation of workers of the occupied Arab territories*, and *A new era of social justice*.

Post-revolutionary Tunisia, free Tunisia, represents freedom, hope and the will to move towards a better future for all Tunisians. We have undergone a transitional period towards the affirmation of a true democratic transformation and the creation of a new republic.

Today, we are striving for a democracy that will ensure economic and social development; a democracy that is based on transparency, justice and rights; a democracy that reactivates investments,

revives enterprises and creates jobs for young people, who only wish to work and enter the labour market.

Here before you today, I would like to express the wholehearted thanks of the Tunisian Union of Industry, Trade and Handicrafts to the ILO for organizing two visits to our country just after the revolution and for expressing its readiness to provide any necessary technical assistance during this transitional period to promote employment, the private sector and the development of professional relations between the social partners.

We hope that this attitude will be translated into concrete action to strengthen relations between the various parties and, hence, promote social peace as part of a competitive economy truly capable of development and job creation.

My thanks also go to the International Organisation of Employers, who provided much support to our country.

It was the young people who launched this revolution, a revolution that had no political angle but whose main themes were freedom, labour and dignity. But what we need today is for civil society and the social partners to protect the revolution from veering off course or stagnating, and to continue striving to achieve its objectives.

With the social partners, we hope to preserve a social peace that strengthens stability and encourages a real and responsible dialogue that can help to save the economy, boost enterprises, preserve employment and establish jobs that are productive and sustainable.

We are fully aware of the scope of the responsibility of the private sector at present to increase development and satisfy the legitimate aspirations of the young people of Tunisia, who were at the origin of this dignified revolution.

We have to redouble our efforts to boost national and foreign direct investment, encourage the spirit of enterprise and focus attention on regions where economic development has not met the expectations of their people.

Naturally, any revolution brings about a difficult situation and creates obstacles. We are trying therefore to allay the fears of the people and to encourage them to view the future with hope. Of course, the fruits of the revolution, namely transparency and justice, are bound to have a positive impact on investment and will contribute to the development of cooperation with many of our economic partners, both in the Maghreb region and in the Arab, African, European and other countries that are part of the groups with which we have a dialogue, and we welcome them to our country with open arms.

Our country, which has a 3,000-year rich history of successive civilizations and has always been a place for meetings, peace and cooperation, is open to others. It is a country where culture is very important; a country of harmony and understanding that cherishes peace and freedom.

Some said during the G8 meeting in Deauville that the Tunisian revolution will now be part of the heritage of humanity. Today, we are relying on ourselves above all to see that this transitional phase succeeds, but we are also relying on all those who believe in freedom and in the right of people to dignity, justice and the success of this process.

The success of our revolution will become a reference point for all those who hope for a better future. Its success is a responsibility for all of us, be-

cause it is a message of hope and optimism for the future that we are sending to the world.

We want peace and freedom for ourselves, but also for all countries and all people, in particular our brothers the Palestinian people, whose battle we support and whose suffering we feel. We call on everyone here to help their just and legitimate cause to triumph so that they too can live in peace, freedom and sovereignty on their land in an independent State.

Original Korean: Mr LEE (Minister of Employment and Labour, Republic of Korea)

The recent global economic crisis has taught us that the current model of economic development centred on quantitative growth is no longer effective or sustainable.

As the Director-General has pinpointed in his Report, we believe that now is the time for governments, employers and workers to cooperate and to pool our wisdom and strength to try a new model of economic growth that delivers social justice.

Rapid globalization, coupled with technological advancement, has led to growth without job creation. So we now live in an era of crisis with respect to employment where people, in every corner of the globe, are eager for jobs and better opportunities.

The Republic of Korea has recovered from the global economic crisis more smoothly and swiftly than many other countries yet many Koreans still think that the labour market situation has not improved much.

The Korean Government has placed jobs at the top of the national agenda to create an inclusive and fair society through jobs. We attach great importance to the two following policy priorities.

First, we aim to steer the labour market to add more jobs. To this end, we announced the 2020 national employment strategy in October of last year, which is the framework for job-centred government policies.

This strategy is focused on building an inclusive society that grants everyone a fair chance to work through a virtuous cycle of growth, employment and welfare.

Specifically, we have redoubled our efforts to enhance the employability of vulnerable groups, such as young people who are willing to work but have less access to jobs, women who want to return to work, and the elderly who want to continue to work.

Now, more training opportunities and effective job-placement services are provided for them. Also, welfare reforms are under way to encourage people to work, thereby helping the working poor to lift themselves out of poverty through work.

The strategy also includes the employment impact assessment which the Director-General took note of in his Report.

For a start, from this year, major government projects are required to specify the expected job creation effects in order to use the assessment as the basis of budget allocation and execution.

Additionally, the nationwide cooperative governance for job creation programme, which includes central and local governments, as well as the private sector, should guide us in our quest to address the current jobs crisis.

Secondly, we seek to develop industrial relations that create more jobs. Since 1987, during the democracy movement in the Republic of Korea and the 1998 Asian financial crisis, the Government has

been promoting workers' rights and cooperative industrial relations that bring win-win solutions to both labour and management.

However, employers were previously making full payment to full-time union officials, which is not the best way of handling matters, and multiple trade unions were not allowed at company level, which served to limit workers' rights of association. It made it difficult to achieve advanced and mature industrial relations.

Thirteen years of in-depth consultation and discussion among workers, employers and the Government have finally found solutions.

Starting from July of last year, the paid time off system came into effect. It grants paid time off to union officials as an exception to the general principle of a ban on such payments to full-time union officials provided that their activities are necessary for both labour and management.

The system has been smoothly implemented with 90 per cent application and 99 per cent compliance with the legislation.

From July of this year, workers will finally be able to enjoy multiple trade unions at the company level and collective bargaining will take place via representative unions.

The ILO issued a total of 11 Recommendations requesting the Korean Government to adopt union pluralism to guarantee workers' freedom of association. Workers, employers and the Government went through laborious negotiations but finally we succeeded.

The revised Act of 2010 addresses the unique circumstances of the Republic of Korea's industrial relations and is in compliance with international standards. The ILO has recognized that this system of collective bargaining with exclusive rights for the most representative trade union is compatible with the principles of freedom of association. Henceforth, trade unions in the country will enjoy a high level of autonomy. The workers' right to organize will now be fully guaranteed. Having one single representative bargaining union will ensure the orderly exercise of collective bargaining.

Also, as workers' voices will be heard by a more democratic mechanism, the representative bargaining union will have strong leverage at the negotiating table.

We, the Korean Government, appreciate the ILO's support and advice with respect to advancing the country's industrial relations.

I am pleased to give you this update on our progress.

The Republic of Korea is now going to advance its industrial relations into full quantitative or qualitative maturity, after having expanded labour rights protection in quantitative terms. We are committed in particular to upgrading our industrial relations so that they compare with those of other advanced nations. In particular, six members of the Sixth Subcommittee on Labour Issues from the National Assembly, including Member of Parliament Lee Mi-kyung, are present here today in celebration of this historic 100th Session of the ILO Conference and to actively support the advancement of the Republic of Korea's industrial relations.

Sustainable economic growth becomes attainable when we pursue growth, employment and welfare in balance. Additionally, large companies, SMEs, regular workers and non-regular workers should come together to forge stronger cooperation based

on mutual understanding and respect under which the outcomes will be fairly shared.

Therefore, we encourage both labour and management to actively take up their social responsibilities, together with their colleagues and their communities.

The ILO has been at the forefront of consolidation of a virtuous circle of growth, employment and welfare while seeking social justice in the course of economic recovery.

I hope that this centennial session will be the venue for member States to share best practices while also engaging in constructive discussions to chart a new and sustainable growth path.

Ms THAPPER (*Worker, Sweden*)

The Report of the Director-General should be compulsory reading for all politicians, in order to give them a clear understanding that a new, sustainable and efficient growth model is needed, and quickly. There can be no social justice for a fair globalization without it.

Policies over the last 30 years have resulted in the continued growth of inequality, accompanied by social and developmental imbalances, and the results are clear for all to see. The poor are suffering. The Millennium Development Goals will most probably not be achieved, and human rights are not respected everywhere.

The workers and the unemployed, in particular, are paying the price for these bad policies. The latest financial crisis has not scared or made governments of the world sufficiently aware to begin building a new world, where economic growth goes hand-in-hand with social growth. Instead, in many developed countries, where the crisis originated and which were also hit the hardest, "business as usual" policies have made a return. Working men and women, in the private and public sectors, as well as pensioners and small enterprises, who bear no responsibility for the crisis, now suffer the impact of this "back to business" policy.

With this in mind, it is not surprising that all figures show that confidence in our governance system is at an all-time low. The question is: when will they learn?

Workers are increasingly worried about the future. We can see that our needs and aspirations are not the priority of many governments. We see the unacceptably high levels of youth unemployment and, where it is highest, social unrest, most recently in the Arab world. We see a lack of decent income and a concentration of wealth. When we hear that the 60 million richest people in the world are earning the same as the 3.5 billion poorest in the world put together, our response is clear: this is absurd. It is wrong and it has to change.

The Report also says that, at the present rate, it will take 75 years for women to earn the same as men for equal work. Seventy-five years! Politicians cannot abdicate their responsibility. Instead, they must use all their skills and political will to turn the tide.

Collective bargaining is the best tool to decrease wage inequality. Democratic and free workers' and employers' organizations are crucial. We know that collective bargaining guarantees workers a share in the productivity gains, and thereby also contributes to productivity.

The Swedish model contains the concept of the Decent Work Agenda. The Swedish Government

talks nicely about it at events abroad, for instance at the latest World Economic Forum. At the same time, the same Government has, since coming into power more than five years ago, implemented severe changes that have seriously worsened the conditions of workers, in terms of employment security, health insurance and occupational health and safety protection, to name but a few.

Solidarity and equality is about taking a moral stance. It is unacceptable, in every sense, not to provide for our children, their education, to secure decent work for them, decent lives and the possibility to achieve their dreams.

In 2019, the ILO will celebrate its 100th anniversary. Let us hope that these celebrations can provide results, marking the beginning of a new era.

There has been no real progress with regard to the situation of workers in the occupied Arab territories, and the situation will never improve without the removal of restrictions imposed by the occupying Israeli forces, and indeed an end to the occupation itself. If the occupation does not end, there can be no economic or employment growth. The Palestinians are subjected to discrimination. The occupation stops them from seeking, or obtaining, employment and prosperity in accordance with the freedom and rights enshrined in the Constitution of the ILO.

In conclusion, the Swedish workers will continue our cooperation and solidarity with the Palestinian workers, and we demand that Israel ends its occupation of the occupied Arab territories.

Original Spanish: Mr ESPINOSA GUZMÁN (Minister of Industrial Relations, Ecuador)

Ladies and gentlemen, allow me first of all to offer fraternal greetings from the Western hemisphere, on behalf of the President of the Republic of Ecuador, Mr Rafael Correa Delgado.

The Ministry of Industrial Relations in Ecuador is responsible for human resources and remuneration, both in the public and private sectors. Over the past two years, Ecuador has made historic progress in terms of labour, support for workers and development in the country. In this short speech I would like to mention three major achievements of the Government.

On 6 October 2010, a new law entered into force concerning the public service, the only law in Latin America which allows for the regulation of remuneration of the entire public sector in all sections of the State through a single institution. This law therefore makes it possible, gradually, to get rid of the excesses and privileges which were the preserve of a small number of organizations and renders the public sector remuneration system fairer.

This law is the result of three years of study of labour legislation and issues in Latin America and Ecuador, and as a result of this change, the Ministry is responsible for around 470,000 civil servants. The law renders the public service more efficient through the introduction of variable remuneration based on performance, bonuses to attract the country's top professionals to outlying areas and career development. Pensions have also been improved enormously for public servants who retire at 70, giving the younger generation a chance at improving youth employment.

We have created the Institute for Meritocracy which monitors compulsory public sector competitive examinations. We are aware that the basis of

development anywhere in the world is an efficient public sector and the only prerequisite for employment in the public sector is being the best.

We are focusing transformation in the public sector on three axes, physical restructuring of public sector institutions, automation and implementation of IT systems and optimization of human talent.

The second achievement consists of the "decent work" programme, that is a fundamental part of the labour inspections which we have been carrying out. Prior to those inspections, we carried out an intense awareness-raising and training campaign on duties and rights at work that involved both workers and employers. We have almost tripled the number of inspectors. This is an unprecedented campaign in the history of our country and it is having a significant multiplying effect. It is ensuring that businesses and commercial establishments come up to date in terms of their labour obligations. Beyond sanctioning non-compliance, the ultimate goal of this programme is to achieve the synergy necessary to ensure that workers and employers can work together in teams towards the same goal, while maintaining harmonious labour relations.

We have been focusing on tripartite work. In December of last year, 22 sectoral committees were brought together to set minimum sectoral wages and in 14 areas there was agreement between workers and employers. For the first time, all of those committees came together and more than 70 meetings were held over a period of six months.

We are changing the relationship between capital and work so that in no way are profits more important than human beings. Furthermore, we are working to ensure that the profitability of enterprises is not based on labour exploitation and low wages.

I would like to take this opportunity to state that the International Labour Organization is currently developing an international Convention to establish minimum working conditions for domestic workers and this is the area where we have made our third achievement. It is a moment of great pride for me to state that we are one of the most advanced countries in terms of protecting domestic workers.

We launched a campaign for domestic workers' rights and we have a basic unified minimum wage which also applies to those workers.

More than 50,000 individuals, workers and employers, have been trained at 260 mobile training units in the country and we have carried out more than 16,000 inspections to ensure that employers are paying domestic workers the wage which they should receive for their working day. They have also been encouraged to integrate them into the social security system and to meet with all legislative provisions.

We have also registered domestic workers and trained them in first aid, public service, childcare, care for the elderly (in particular, cookery and safety) in order to raise standards in this area.

We are living in a period of change. We are moving towards greater efficiency in the public sector with the new law on the public service and the Institute for Meritocracy. We have raised the number of inspections and are promoting the rights of domestic workers, as well as encouraging the tripartite social dialogue. Thank you very much.

(The Conference adjourned at 12.35 p.m.)

Eleventh sitting

Monday, 13 June 2011, 2.45 p.m.

President: Mr Hossu

REPORTS OF THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE GOVERNING BODY AND OF THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL: DISCUSSION (CONT.)

Original French: The PRESIDENT

We shall resume the discussion of the Reports of the Chairperson of the Governing Body and of the Director-General.

Original French: Ms KORA ZAKI LEADI (Government, Benin)

Allow me, at the outset, to express my gratitude to the Director-General of the International Labour Office and to the Organization that he leads, for all their ongoing efforts to guarantee peace and social justice in the world.

The global economic crisis, which began in 2008, has had harmful effects on all countries, especially those developing countries whose economic situation had already started to deteriorate. The consequences on the people living in those countries have been enormous, in particular for the workers threatened with the loss of their jobs. The decrease in export duty has also increased the precarious situation in countries whose budgets mainly comprise tax revenue.

In view of these challenges and the negative impact of this crisis on the labour market, the International Labour Office has understood the seriousness of the threats that we are facing to, in particular, the productivity of enterprises, job creation and respect for labour standards and legislation. The ILO has initiated several actions, including a high-level Summit on the Global Jobs Crisis, which took place here in Geneva in 2009 and brought together Heads of State and Government from all continents.

The work of the Summit led to the adoption of the Global Jobs Pact, whose main objective is reviving the labour market based on the work of women. It aims at placing employment, social protection and respect for workers' rights at the centre of national policies and, hence, attenuating the effects of the crisis.

Emphasis is placed on the concept of decent work as a driver for increasing development, fighting poverty and exiting this crisis. The Pact is based on fundamental labour standards and incorporates the strategic objectives of the ILO, in particular social protection, the promotion of decent work for everyone and social dialogue.

To assist member States in their implementation of the Decent Work Agenda, the ILO has initiated

Decent Work Country Programmes as a reference point for its cooperation with the States.

Several countries, including Benin, already have their Decent Work Country Programmes. Measures responding to the crisis should strongly emphasize the needs of workers and their family members, as well as the viability of the enterprises that create decent jobs.

In including the issue of the global economic crisis and the contribution of the ILO in the agenda of the 100th Session of the Conference, the ILO clearly wished to involve the tripartite constituents in an evaluation of the actions of enterprises to overcome the crisis, so as to see how far we have come and how far we have yet to go.

It is important that the implementation of the Global Jobs Pact takes into account the needs of countries, resources and national priorities. At the same time, the crisis will not be overcome if an individualistic approach is taken to it. In combating this crisis, we must have solidarity among all countries through social dialogue processes so that we reach a global solution through tripartite action.

This is the time to thank the ILO for adopting this Pact. It is a valuable instrument that involves job creation and social protection as development strategies. The ILO has a leading role to play in creating the conditions for reviving the labour market.

The ILO has committed itself to assisting the constituents who ask for help in implementing the Global Jobs Pact, which constitutes, together with the Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization, a suitable framework for defining the measures to combat this crisis.

So as to attenuate the effects of the crisis on our population, the Government of Benin has taken several initiatives, including helping the most vulnerable sectors of society. The main beneficiaries of these actions are women, who are allocated micro-credit to improve their livelihoods. We also carry out activities to promote small and medium-sized enterprises, productivity growth and the implementation of infrastructure and agricultural equipment. A roadmap for potential work for young people and women has been adopted, which provides an overview of economic opportunities, growth markets and employment opportunities throughout Benin.

The national development policies and strategies that incorporate job creation and poverty reduction include the following: developing small, medium-sized and micro-enterprises, which generate employment, in particular in the agro-industry; imple-

menting basic infrastructure in agriculture to improve the stability of production; developing a concentrated and efficient road network; implementing labour-intensive urban works; and developing an industrial sector and the artisanal subsector, which creates more than 12 per cent of jobs.

In social protection, it seems important to me to recall that the economic environment of our country is based on two sectors: the formal, structured sector and the informal sector, which represents a large part of our economic activity. The Government, together with the ILO, has implemented social security programmes to help workers in the informal sector who are not covered by the standard regime.

Original Spanish: Mr GUTIÉRREZ CANDIANI (Employer, Mexico)

The Confederation of Mexican Employers (COPARMEX), as an organization representing the employers of Mexico, welcomes the focus of this session of the Conference on the overarching concerns and initiatives that the Director-General has set out in the presentation of his Report, *A new era of social justice*.

We share his concerns, his hopes and his call to all those of us in positions of representation or decision-making throughout the world to assume our historic responsibility in this time of transformations, challenges and uncertainties.

The diagnosis is clear: we cannot say that the global economic crisis of 2009 has been overcome until we have established the basis for more accelerated development, but a development which is fair and sustainable, with a type of globalization that is more humanist, inclusive, socially responsible and viable in environmental terms.

Other crises will arise if we are unable to create not only opportunities but also the hundreds of millions of decent jobs that are needed across the globe.

Mr Somavia rightly reminds us that this is the minimum and just demand of the young people who have gone out onto the streets and squares in different countries to protest against an economic reality that does not include them, that rejects them, or that asks them to wait indefinitely, as if it were not a basic necessity and a right to have a decent job, which makes it possible to maximize one's potential, participate in a productive manner in society, and access the public and private benefits provided by formal work.

The call to action at this Conference ties in with the values of the employers' association that I represent, and with efforts currently being made in Mexico.

Without doubt, these are times to prepare to enter a new era of effective social and economic growth, to decide what we want the twenty-first century to be and what we need to do to achieve it.

The employers of Mexico are doing just that. We are driving forward, together with other stakeholders in society and with public participation, the setting up of a national project which everyone can buy into – a new pact for all Mexicans, which will give us a clear direction.

Faced with a multidimensional and interdependent set of problems, we have to respond with an integral and systemic approach.

The proposal we are putting to our nation is based on three notions which we share with the majority of the population – free competition, democracy and

social responsibility – and which, in our view, are sustained by the principles of justice, solidarity and subsidiarity.

On this foundation, we have built new initiatives to reform our Federal Labour Act, which has remained substantially unchanged for more than 41 years.

By ensuring the fundamental rights of workers and enterprises, we want to adapt ourselves to the new realities of productive processes and society.

Our starting point is that we must protect existing jobs, but we must also open opportunities to the unemployed, young people and those working in precarious conditions in the informal sector.

We are seeking greater legal certainty for all parties. We want to fight child exploitation and discrimination of all types. We support working mothers, the disabled, and agricultural and migrant workers.

We must ensure the sustainability of our labour centres, with effective cooperation between employees and employers, take advantage of the possibilities offered by technology, and promote small and medium-sized enterprises, which are – and will continue to be – the major generators of employment.

The flexibility that many companies and workers call for does not necessarily contradict either our demographic challenges or the social security and health to which everybody is entitled.

Here, a multidimensional approach is key to including such things as universal health and social security provision in the equation. In countries like ours, this is a real possibility, but it requires indispensable reforms, including to the public finance sector.

The challenges and the various solutions which we are proposing are similar in many countries, particularly emerging countries. At a global level, there is also the need for a clearer and more consensual vision, with a holistic and multilateral approach.

Only in that way will we be able to advance in areas such as decent work, international mobility of workers and migration, one of the most pressing issues for a globalized society. History will judge our ability to make the most of this challenge, one of the greatest windows of opportunity for human development.

The call of the employers of COPARMEX to Mexicans is to live in and build a nation based on our needs, aspirations and potential, not on inertia, outdated paradigms, ideologies, myths and vested interests, which we must overcome.

This has to be a commitment at a global level, in this era of overwhelming challenges but also of extraordinary possibilities for the progress of all peoples.

Let us take this opportunity to create a better future, through the capacity of human beings to adapt. In this task, you have the support of Mexican employers and the people of Mexico.

Mr KUDATGOBİLİK (Employer, Turkey)

This is a very meaningful international gathering, because the ILO is celebrating the 100th Session of the International Labour Conference. Moments such as these are important for any nation or international institution and by all means for the ILO, which is the most senior economic and social organization of the United Nations family.

As a representative of Turkish employers, who are certainly placed at the heart of the economy, I can therefore tell you the naked truth. I shall be very brief and mention some basic statistics recently published by international organizations such as the IMF, the World Bank, the OECD and the Turkish Statistical Institute.

After shrinking by 4.8 per cent in 2009, the Turkish economy grew by 8.9 per cent in 2010. This gave Turkey the third rank in the world growth league after China and India. With this performance, Turkey was also at the top of the OECD countries last year. According to the IMF, our country will achieve 4.6 per cent growth rate this year. Although this will again place Turkey ahead of most European countries, we, as Turkish employers and businessmen, expect a somewhat higher growth rate by looking at the performance of our country in the first half of this year.

I would like to take this opportunity to point out the role played by the social partners in achieving these results. Turkey is among those countries which managed to skip to a quick recovery path from the global crisis environment. In fact, the harmonious relations between employers and workers, and the attitudes and policies of our Government based on social dialogue, have contributed to the creation of a peaceful working environment in our country.

In this respect, I would also like to commend the measures taken by our Government against the unemployment created by the crisis, such as short-time working arrangements.

While on the subject of social peace and dialogue in our country, I will also very briefly mention the studies undertaken during the last decade concern-

ing the amendment of the Trade Unions Act (No. 2821), and the Collective Labour Agreements, Strike and Lock-out Act (No. 2822). We largely completed our work at meetings among the social partners at the beginning of this year, and the final draft of the Trade Unions Act was circulated to all parties concerned.

Within the draft finalized by negotiations between the social partners, there is still one item – the establishment of workplace and occupational trade unions and federations – with which our Confederation does not agree. We have been 100 per cent in agreement with the other general terms. I therefore believe that this legislation will be adopted very quickly without undermining the labour system, and that the social partners will proceed hand in hand.

Before I conclude, I would like to express our appreciation for the Director-General's Report that advocates a new "efficient growth path" and globalization based on social justice. As Turkish employers, we have been elaborating a new growth strategy based on job creation, technology, efficiency, productivity and competitiveness. We have recently set up an ad hoc committee composed of distinguished academics and professional experts to work out a growth model on these principles. We are fully aware of the fact that to be successfully implemented in today's world, such strategies and policies need to be coordinated internationally. To this end, we wholeheartedly believe with the Director-General that the time has come for the ILO to play a leadership role in shaping the debate on the public and private policies in the future.

(The Conference adjourned at 3.05 p.m.)

Twelfth sitting

Monday, 13 June 2011, 5.10 p.m.

Presidents: Mr Lima Godoy and Mr Hossu

REPORTS OF THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE GOVERNING BODY AND OF THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL: DISCUSSION (CONT.)

Original Spanish: The PRESIDENT

The Conference is invited to view a video message from Ms Aung San Suu Kyi, holder of the Nobel Peace Prize.

(A video recording of the message from Ms Aung San Suu Kyi is shown.)

Ms AUNG SAN SUU KYI (Nobel Peace Prize)

The Preamble to the Constitution of the International Labour Organization starts with the very strong and simple statement that universal and lasting peace can be established only if it is based on social justice. Further on, it declares categorically that the failure of any nation to adopt humane conditions of labour is an obstacle in the way of other nations which desire to improve conditions in their own countries. This is a magnificent assertion of the linkage between the destinies of different nations made at a time when globalization was hardly recognized as a word, let alone a concept.

The ILO showed itself thus to be an organization for all times, its mandate firmly rooted in a pragmatic assessment of what needs to be done if our world is to be regulated by peace and justice. Moreover, member States of the ILO are represented not only by Government delegates, but also by delegates of Employers' and Workers', thus making the Organization not only unique among international agencies, but uniquely geared towards a future when international agencies and organizations would need to be the voice not only of governments but of the true representatives of nations – the people.

In choosing the need for a new era of social justice as the theme of this 100th Session, the ILO has shown itself once again to be not just in sync with the times, but perhaps even to be running a little ahead.

Universal and lasting peace has certainly not been assured for the human race and there is an urgent need to try to find new and better roads towards that goal which must always be kept in sight, even if all too often it seems to be unattainably remote.

Globalization presents new opportunities but it also poses new dangers which include, to focus on

the most obvious, the easy dissemination of the propaganda and weapons of hate and terrorism. It is therefore imperative to intensify the quest for peace if we are to keep the earth secure for us and for coming generations.

When the ILO was awarded the Nobel Prize for Peace in 1969, the Chairman of the Nobel Peace Committee recalled the Organization's founding principle, that social justice was the base of lasting peace and stated: "There are few organizations that have succeeded as the ILO has, in translating into action the fundamental moral idea on which it is based." Moral ideas vitalize to become the driving force of practical change is an exhilarating, and, as the ILO has proved, not an impossible, dream.

The current guiding philosophy of the ILO, the Decent Work Agenda, based on international labour standards, employment, social protection and social dialogue, could constitute enormous strides towards social justice, and, hence, progress and peace. We look to the Organization to uphold its record of success through the achievement of these objectives and, in keeping with its credo, to ensure that no nation must be allowed to fail, if all nations are to triumph.

Here I would like to make a special appeal for my own country, Burma. Once upon a time it was considered the nation most likely to succeed in South-East Asia. But now it has fallen behind almost all the other nations in this region. The work of the ILO in our country has highlighted the indivisibility of social, political and economic concerns. In its attempt to eliminate forced labour and the recruitment of child soldiers, the ILO has inevitably been drawn into work related to rule of law, prisoners of conscience and freedom of association.

Six months ago, the National League for Democracy and other organizations and individuals who have been struggling for political change in Burma established a people's network that incorporated social and humanitarian projects into a broad programme for democracy and human rights. The growth, rapid beyond our expectations, of this network is evidence of the indivisibility of social, economic and political concerns, and of the hunger of our people for a society secured by acceptable norms of social justice joined to political and economic progress.

We look to the ILO to expand its activities in Burma to help usher in an era of broad-based social justice in our country. We are particularly con-

cerned that our workers should be enabled to form trade unions consonant with the highest international standards as soon as possible. Labour rights are integral to the triumphant development of a nation and, once again, may I reiterate the declaration of faith of the ILO that failure in one nation places obstacles in the way of progress in all other nations. Burma must not be allowed to fail and the world must not be allowed to fail Burma.

I would like to conclude with a heartfelt expression of appreciation for what the ILO has been able to achieve in Burma, in spite of many difficulties. I hope that a progressively closer cooperation can be developed between the Organization and all those who sincerely wish for lasting peace solidly founded on social, economic and political justice, not just in our country, but throughout our world.

Original Portuguese: Mr LUPI (Government, Brazil)

On this, the occasion of the 100th Session of the International Labour Conference, I would like to say how pleased I am to be here for the fifth consecutive year, participating in these high-level discussions, which have a direct influence on the day-to-day lives of workers and employers throughout the world.

This experience has been one which has made me a better public servant, thanks to the discussions I have had here. It has also been very useful, making me more aware of labour issues, and I can only thank you for once again giving me this opportunity.

The world has seen a great deal of change recently, with crises and wars. Challenges which seemed insurmountable have been met.

We have also confirmed the ILO's mission to protect workers throughout the world. We would like to congratulate all the Members here present as we discuss the future of generations to come.

The Brazilian delegation is very pleased to see that we have a text which protects some of the most vulnerable employees in the world, domestic workers. Such workers are often exposed to various types of abuse and discrimination, on the basis of race, gender, colour and ethnicity. In Brazil, the domestic work sector accounts for about 7 million workers.

Domestic workers lack effective protection and only about 10 per cent are actually registered as having jobs. That is why we would like to support this new draft Convention to protect domestic workers. It will give them access to the right to a decent job and dignified living conditions. You can count on our full support within the ILO. We think that this is a very important event at the time of this 100th Session of the Conference. This will make it possible for domestic workers to go down to the Ministry of Labour offices and to benefit from mediation with the employers, as well as giving them the right to have signed workbooks. Brazil is committed to strengthening social protection and extending coverage to the most vulnerable sectors of society as a part of our ongoing fight.

I would like to highlight that the Federal Government has launched the *Brazil without Poverty* plan. This is backed by President Dilma Rousseff. The main aim is to lift around 16 million Brazilians out of extreme poverty. President Rousseff said that "My Government will focus its efforts on eliminating extreme poverty and creating opportunities for all. I shall not rest while there remain Brazilians

without food on the table, families living in the streets, poor children abandoned to their fate. Families can only be made strong if they have food, peace, happiness and jobs."

Indeed, one of the pillars of the Brazil without Poverty plan is social inclusion, and vocational training plays a major role in this. The idea is to try to create jobs and income for the poorest in our country while, at the same time, meeting the needs of citizens. The goal is to try and reach 1.7 million people between the ages of 18 and 65, via the coordinated efforts of the national employment system, the National Programme for Youth Inclusion, the National Programme for Access to Technical Training and the Growth Acceleration Programme. All of these different programmes aim to ensure that Brazilians can be part of the productive economy.

We will be bringing together the training system and the employers. The idea is to try and provide 200 different types of free technical training classes. We will make sure that everyone gets involved. We will be providing the teaching materials and also food and transport for the participants.

In line with this initiative, I am very pleased to say that we are preparing for the first national conference on employment and decent work, which will be organized in May 2012. Preparatory meetings are being held in each of the Brazilian states in order to define decent work for all Brazilians.

We need to make progress when it comes to improving macroeconomic measurements, finance, production and social policies. We are building on what was done by President Lula, and the achievements of President Rousseff, Brazil's first female president.

More than 15 million jobs were created in the formal sector during Mr Lula's presidency. By May 2011, the new Government had created 1 million new jobs.

Brazil is coming to this podium not just to ask for solidarity, but to offer it to others.

We need to have security and safety in our workplaces. In our country, and across the world, many workers are exposed to high-risk situations. There is a lack of proper working conditions and this leaves millions of Brazilians and citizens throughout the world at risk. We see the importance of this Conference in tackling that issue. It is vital that job-seekers be provided with decent work, that the workers be protected, that they have dignity in the workplace, that they can produce without risk to their personal safety and to their mental health.

Original Chinese: Mr YIN (Minister of Human Resources and Social Security, China)

On the occasion of the 100th Session of the International Labour Conference, it is important to look back on the road the ILO has travelled and discuss the challenges facing the world of work today. I agree with the Director-General's proposals in his Report, *A new era of social justice*, and appreciate that certain countries have made efforts to transform their economic growth patterns, actively tackle the economic crisis and social problems, and promote inclusive growth through decent work.

Although the world economy is recovering, many uncertainties and destabilizing factors still remain. As a result, the process of world economic recovery will be a tortuous one. As the Director-General pointed out in his Report, the continuing low rate of job growth and high unemployment, the increase in

informal employment and a widening income gap all remain common concerns for all countries.

The international financial crisis has prompted countries to rethink their economic growth patterns. Increasingly, people have come to realize that, in the process of economic development, more emphasis must be placed on promoting social equity and justice, so that development can benefit everyone.

At the fifth Asia–Pacific Economic Cooperation Human Resources Development ministerial meeting last year, the Chinese President Hu Jintao called for inclusive growth to resolve social problems which emerged as part of the process of economic development.

China is a strong supporter of inclusive growth and actively pursues that approach. In recent years, the Chinese Government has been committed to integrating economic development with improvements in people’s livelihoods, speeding up the development of social programmes and achieving comprehensive, balanced, and sustainable economic and social development.

China’s efforts have paid off in the following areas: first, China has overcome the impact of the international financial crisis and maintained stable employment.

Over the past five years, 57 million jobs have been created in urban areas, with an annual increase of more than 11 million jobs. Additionally, 45 million surplus rural workers have been transferred to non-agricultural sectors and the unemployment rate in urban areas has been capped at below 4.3 per cent.

Second, breakthroughs have been made in the development of social security systems. China has enacted a law on social insurance. The social insurance coverage has expanded rapidly, for example, health insurance covers 1.26 billion people, and pension insurance coverage has been extended from only covering urban workers to both urban and rural residents, and is set to cover the entire population by 2015.

Third, labour relations in China have been, on the whole, harmonious and stable. The Government has strengthened its protection of workers’ interests and improved labour contract systems and a collective contract system.

Steady progress has been made with regard to an increase in workers’ wages. In 2010, the average annual wage for urban workers increased by 77 per cent in comparison to 2006. At the same time, we are very aware of the challenges and difficulties related to China’s development. We still need to make arduous efforts to achieve full employment and to provide every Chinese person with basic social security.

The Chinese Government has formulated the 12th Five-Year Plan for Economic and Social Development. According to the Plan, we will accelerate the transformation of the economic development pattern, take bigger steps to protect and improve people’s well-being, promote social equity and justice and achieve balanced economic and social progress through sustainable development.

Inclusive growth is the common aspiration of people across the world, and it is an important task that requires Governments to make efforts to achieve that objective. I have the following proposals.

First, we should implement the strategy of giving priority to employment. We should make employ-

ment promotion one of our priority goals for economic and social development, and put in place positive and proactive employment policies and macroeconomic strategies that are conducive to job creation. We need to enhance the coordination of fiscal, financial, industrial and employment policies, create fair employment opportunities, improve the quality of employment and strive to achieve full employment.

Second, we should strengthen social protection. We should strengthen and improve the social security system, tailored to each country so as to attain a goal of basic social security for all, which should in turn improve the income distribution system, so that people’s income grows in tandem with the economy and remuneration with productivity.

Third, we should improve workers’ skills and capabilities. In order to facilitate the transformation of economic growth patterns and the upgrading of economic structures, we need to provide vocational training for all workers, improve their capabilities and skills, promote business growth and create more jobs.

Fourth, we should continue our communication and cooperation. All countries should step up cooperation efforts, dialogue and experience sharing, with an open and inclusive approach. Members of the international community should respect each other’s choice of development path.

Developed countries should take more responsibility and help developing countries increase employment, improve social protection and realize inclusive growth. The ILO should play a bigger role in promoting inclusive growth.

I would like to take this opportunity to announce that, in order to promote South–South cooperation and support developing countries’ technical cooperation in the areas of employment, the Chinese Government has decided to contribute \$1 million to the ILO. Let us work together, and make the necessary contribution to ensuring decent work for all and promoting inclusive growth.

Mr SVETLIK (*Minister of Labour, Family and Social Affairs, Slovenia*)

This year we celebrate the 100th Session of the International Labour Conference. Moments such as these are important for both looking back on our past achievements and looking forward to the challenges ahead. I agree with the Director-General that “with our [the ILO’s] values and policies, we are on the right side of history”.

It is many years since our society last faced such serious challenges as it is facing today. The data in the Report show rising social and economic imbalances and inequalities in our societies. The trends are a cause of serious concern and require urgent action. But in taking any action at whatever level or in whatever area of decision-making, we have to be aware of three important facts.

The sustainable development of our civilization is possible only if we put all three dimensions – social, environmental and economic – on an equal footing. Secondly, social security is a universal need and a basic human right. And third, social policy is an investment in human capital.

In this context, the capacity of the ILO has to be enhanced. We must further strengthen international labour standards, build a social protection floor for the most vulnerable and ensure the effective implementation of adopted standards in practice.

The Global Jobs Pact and Decent Work Agenda have to remain our commitment. The four strategic objectives of the Agenda can help us deliver a sustained, job-rich and equitable recovery.

The Government of Slovenia is making every effort to tackle the social impact of the recent economic and financial crisis. The main measure consists of active labour market policies and measures to support people's income. We have raised the minimum wage by 23 per cent recently. Social transfers, family and social benefits have an important impact on decreasing poverty in Slovenia. During the deepest crisis in 2009–10, we used short-term work arrangements and subsidies for temporary layoffs.

However, the increased pressure on social expenditure is difficult to sustain. A key challenge for labour-market and social policy is to facilitate and encourage employment growth. The economic crisis and slow recovery have added further urgency to meeting the structural challenges facing Slovenia and other welfare states.

As our last experience with the modernization of the pension system shows, structural reforms should be prepared in close cooperation with social partners and other relevant stakeholders. It is important to reach a broad social consensus about the inevitability of structural changes, even when these seem unfavourable at first sight.

An ageing population is our reality in Europe, and pension reforms are urgent. Job creation should go hand in hand with prolonging working lives in order to maintain retirement-income adequacy without jeopardizing financial sustainability.

It is our common responsibility, the responsibility of governments, employers and trade unions alike, not to compromise the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. Governments must maintain a primary responsibility for ensuring social protection for the most vulnerable.

To conclude, I share the view of the Director-General that it is "our responsibility is to help to guide this new era towards social justice for a fair globalization".

Slovenia is only a small piece in this mosaic; however, we strongly agree with the recommendation of the World Commission on the Social Dimension of Globalization established by the ILO that work towards a fairer globalization begins at home. I can assure you that our Government will strive to strengthen the social partnership and further support the values and policies laid down by the ILO.

Ms LAKIČEVIĆ (*State Secretary, Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, Serbia*)

I would like to congratulate the Director-General of the ILO on this year's comprehensive Report. I am convinced that it will encourage and inspire all governments, trade unions and employers' organizations to continue working on the promotion and establishment of social justice within our societies. All the issues highlighted in the Director-General's Report are very important for achieving this goal. Issues such as the relationship between social justice and sustainable development, the creation of new jobs, strategic issues with regard to social security, and other matters mentioned by the Director-General, remain high on the agenda of governments around the world.

However, today, we face the adverse effects of the recent global economic crisis at all levels of society. Workers and employers alike are affected. The prolonged crisis continues to defy efforts by governments to stimulate growth and generate employment. Indeed, contemporary governmental institutions face serious difficulties in their attempts to strike a balance between the need to revive their economies and to achieve a desirable level of social security for all. In order to overcome these challenges, the guidance and support of the ILO will be of major importance. The global economic crisis has demonstrated the need for solidarity; solidarity should become the leitmotif and foundation of our common endeavour to build States with high levels of social cohesion.

Bearing in mind the points I have just made, I would like to stress that Serbia continues to make every possible effort to incorporate all the basic ILO principles and values into its national legislation, as well as to provide a relevant mechanism for their implementation. Each year, the relevant institutions of Serbia report on the ratification and implementation of ILO Conventions. At the same time, Serbia respects all the recommendations that the ILO addresses to its member States in order to promote high labour standards.

In cooperation with ILO experts, last year the Serbian Government prepared a new draft law on strikes. In May last year, it also adopted the new Law on the Prevention of Harassment at the Workplace. The Agency for Peaceful Resolution of Labour Disputes has strengthened its capacities, and we can proudly say that around 90 per cent of all labour disputes in Serbia are now resolved through mediation by this agency.

In the area of gender equality, Serbia has adopted the Law on Gender Equality, a National Strategy on the Improvement of the Status of Women and Gender Equality Promotion, as well as an action plan in order to implement the National Strategy. These documents have established a new legal framework that aims to overcome the pay gap between men and women.

The fight against undeclared labour remains one of the most important priorities of the Serbian Government. In order to resolve this problem, on 23 May 2011, Serbia introduced new measures to encourage all employers to register their workers and thus include them in the national social security system. At the same time, the Government continues strengthening the labour inspectorate and reinforcing social dialogue at both the bipartite and tripartite levels. In this respect, the support of the ILO will be of great value to us in future.

Allow me to conclude by saying that Serbia will remain a reliable and dedicated partner of the ILO in its endeavour to promote and implement higher standards of social security both at the national and international level.

Mr Proença de Macédo, you have the floor, sir.

Original Portuguese: Mr PROENÇA DE MACÊDO (Employer, Brazil)

It is an honour for me to take the floor on behalf of the Brazilian employers to discuss the Report of the Director-General of the ILO, Mr Juan Somavia, entitled *A new era of social justice*.

First of all, I would like to support the statement to the effect that human society is going through a period of profound change, involving the replace-

ment of fundamental paradigms in a process out of which we all hope will rise a period of greater social justice, in which the majority of the global population will benefit from technological advances, globalization and the new geopolitical order.

We should not forget that the economic growth of the last 30 years has improved the social situation and allowed us to make progress regarding a number of serious issues. Perhaps I could mention what is happening in my own country as a starting point.

In Brazil, we have been fighting to try and help all Brazilians to have access to better education, health care and well-being, and many in our country have come to enjoy such benefits. We are not complacent with regard to the social inequalities which remain and we need to continue to do everything we can to reduce them. We must redouble our efforts to ensure that there are more decent work opportunities. The employers of Brazil play a central role in such efforts as producers of goods, providers of services and creators of employment and income. We pay taxes which lead to productive investment.

I am certain that the crises affecting the world economy are part of the process of trial and error which gave rise to the system of free initiative and that system is the only one capable of generating the wealth required for social progress. The technological progress and economic growth that are produced and stimulated by this new world order should be put to good use in our political systems, in order to meet this very ambitious goal of social justice. However, we must learn from past errors. Things such as social realism and its mistakes, for example, which ended with the fall of the Berlin Wall. We should not forget that. That should be a symbol which speaks volumes. If we all want a better, more just and equal world, one with decent work and decent life for all, we have no alternative but to build political democracies and market economies. Despite the shortcomings which are inherent in these models, they are nonetheless the only models which have proved that they can generate sustainable development.

That is why the ILO should remind its member States of the need for a global environment to create jobs and the development of sustainable enterprises. They need to focus on that as much as they do to decent work because these two concepts are two sides of the same coin. They are compatible because, in the long run, neither one can be achieved without the other. Finally, I should like to reaffirm our belief in the fundamental principles of this Organization, in particular social dialogue and tripartism.

Original Arabic: Mr EL BORAI (Minister of Manpower and Migration, Egypt)

It is a great pleasure for me to take part in the current session of the International Labour Conference, which marks the 100th anniversary of this annual Conference for the discussion of labour issues. This year, the Conference is being held at a very important time for Egypt and the Arab world.

On this occasion, I would like to extend particular thanks to the Director-General for his Report, *A new era of social justice*. The serious content of this Report requires careful study. It is an extremely important document that carefully analyses today's realities and the challenges we face. These challenges concern the promotion of social justice, which has been one of the principles and pillars of this Or-

ganization since it was established. It is also one of the main bases of public demands for change.

This year's Conference is the first for the new Egypt; the post-revolution Egypt. The revolution of 25 January 2011 was peaceful and civilized and took place under the slogan "Human dignity, freedom and social justice". It opened a new chapter, a chapter full of hope in the long history of Egypt. I am particularly proud to speak on behalf of this Egypt and to convey to you the message of this great revolution, whose objectives and meanings are in harmony with the principles of this Organization.

It is clear that the latest developments in Egypt represent a strong call from the hundreds of millions of people in the world who aspire to social justice and freedom. They also reflect the suffering of large swathes of society who have paid the price of economic policies implemented at the national and international level that failed to take into account the essence of true development and the principles of justice and equity and that relied on economic indicators and illusory growth linked to capitalist and monetary funds that are not shared among all categories of the population and have not ensured a fair distribution of income.

Young people were the catalyst for the Egyptian revolution; they rose up to retrieve their political and economic position in society and to demand decent jobs and social justice to protect them from poverty and need. This revolution crossed borders within the Arab world and gave a new image of this world. To talk of the revolution in Egypt or in Tunisia is to talk about social justice and what lies beyond.

Unemployment in Egypt is around 11.9 per cent, according to May 2011 statistics; 45 per cent of young people under the age of 26, 80 per cent of whom are university graduates, are unemployed. The poverty rate, those living on less than US\$2 a day, is 42 per cent of the population. Such statistics impelled the leaders of the revolution to make social justice a priority policy. I would like to set out before you today the measures we took in that regard:

First of all, re-establishment of freedom of association in Egypt, with a view to being in full compliance with the provisions of the Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention, 1948 (No. 87), and the Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining Convention, 1949 (No. 98), both ratified by Egypt. Workers and employers are thus free to establish and join trade unions and trade unions are guaranteed freedom to act in accordance with their mandates, without any interference from the Government. We wish to stress here that Egypt is determined to continue to carry out and consolidate the principles of freedom of association. We are currently drafting a new bill on trade unions that has been circulated to the social partners and civil society organizations for their views.

Second, the Government has decided, for the first time, as pointed out by the Minister of Finance a few minutes ago, to establish a minimum wage, in compliance with Conventions on the minimum wage, in particular the Minimum Wage-Fixing Machinery Convention, 1928 (No. 26), and the Minimum Wage Fixing Convention, 1970 (No. 131), both ratified by Egypt. This is part of our comprehensive review of the wage structure, which was destabilized following the introduction of the cen-

tralized system in 1962 and then the return to the liberal regime in 1991.

Third, our Government, aware of the need to combat unemployment in order to reduce poverty, has included 2 billion Egyptian pounds, i.e. US\$350 million, in its general budget for 2011–12 to establish a training and unemployment fund. This fund will provide retraining for the unemployed, in particular young people, and bridge the gap between higher education and the needs of the labour market.

I would like to point out here that the task of combating unemployment and organizing training in Egypt is a very difficult matter that requires the participation of all. We are fully aware of the difficulties we face and we call on international organizations and friendly countries to assist us.

Ms ENGSTRÖM (*Minister for Employment, Sweden*)

I am honoured to be here today, and to speak for the first time before this august assembly. The timing is perfect. This year, the International Labour Conference celebrates its 100th Session.

Let me start by expressing my Government's support for the ILO's tireless work to promote employment and decent work. The ILO is as relevant today as when it was founded. I would like to repeat what we have said for many years in the ILO, namely that employment issues and core labour standards should be part of a wider international agenda. Lately, the ILO has taken on a prominent role at the G20 meetings and strengthened its cooperation with other international organizations.

Sweden strongly supports the concept of policy coherence, mainstreaming employment and gender equality issues into other policy areas.

By acting together with other multilateral organizations, the ILO can contribute more forcefully to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.

Secondly, I would like to highlight the subject of this year's Global Report, namely equality at work. In spite of the economic crisis, anti-discrimination legislation has been introduced in many parts of the world. New equality bodies have been established to monitor the impact of existing legislation. These developments have been very gratifying. All forms of discrimination are obstacles to democracy. The basic principle is simple: every person regardless of, for example, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, age or disability, is of equal value and equal dignity, and must be able to enjoy their human rights. I hope that all of us agree on these principles.

On the other hand, the economic downturn might lead to increased discrimination, and risk excluding people permanently from the labour market. This risk is especially acute for those who are in unstable and temporary employment. It is evident from the Report that discrimination on multiple grounds is becoming more frequent. I fully endorse the conclusion that we have to raise awareness of multiple discrimination. Many persons suffer from discrimination in the workplace. With an ageing population in many parts of the world, we cannot afford to have large groups of people who cannot take part in working life. Having more people in work, whether they are young or old, women or men, people with disabilities or migrant workers, among others, contributes to a more sustainable society, as well as increasing the living standard of each individual.

Thirdly, as I understand, the discussion on labour inspection has been fruitful, and labour inspection has a key role to play to ensure that the standards of decent work and good working conditions are constantly upheld. However, labour inspection involves more than control. It also involves finding and mutually strengthening the balance between law enforcement and preventive action, as well as training and information. The labour inspector plays an essential role as a communicator informing the employer about hazards in the workplace and the need for a systematic work management. The importance of social dialogue cannot be underestimated. In my opinion, it is important for the labour inspectorate to base its operations on relevant statistics and inspection methods that are focused and effective, giving priority to the most hazardous workplaces.

Finally, I want to draw attention to the successful discussions of the Committee on Domestic Workers. We have to remember that work performed in an employer's household is one of the main occupations of millions of women around the world – many of whom are migrants. These workers are often vulnerable to serious violations of fundamental human rights, like forced labour, child labour and discrimination.

All ILO member States should have a common interest in the fight against unacceptable working conditions for domestic workers. The Swedish Government welcomes and supports the proposal for a Convention and a Recommendation on this subject. And last, but not least, the Swedish Government is strongly in favour of the initiatives taken by the ILO to develop an instrument regarding universal social security coverage; a social protection floor for all. I believe that these new initiatives are excellent examples of what I referred to at the beginning of my speech. The ILO remains as relevant as ever.

Original Arabic: Mr LOUH (Minister of Labour, Employment and Social Security, Algeria)

The Report of the Director-General to this session deserves our full appreciation in view of the relevance of the subject chosen and its bearing on the events occurring in the world today.

The current system of international relations is faced with challenges that have strategic implications, such as energy, water, food security, economic competition and international terrorism, as well as the challenge of unemployment, especially among young people.

Unfortunately, the worsening imbalances in levels of development between North and South now pose a grave threat to social peace and cohesion. This threat is continually growing, to the point where it seriously jeopardizes international peace and security.

The entire world has witnessed the underlying imbalance in the global financial and economic system, with the international financial institutions unable to prevent successive crises affecting every society in the world today, or even to give advance warning of such crises. This is the truth.

The ILO is called upon to play a decisive role in creating the conditions for reform of the international economic and financial system so as to reconcile economic efficiency and social justice.

Such reform should be accompanied by effective application of the principle of primacy of interna-

tional law and the link between the free movement of goods and that of persons.

Since 1989, Algeria has enacted political and economic reforms and enshrined in its Constitution the principles of political pluralism, freedom of the press, trade union pluralism and the market economy.

It has faced terrorism since the 1990s, and battled it alone.

Since 1999, Algeria has invested enormous financial and material resources in overhauling its infrastructure, in particular improving the roads, modernizing ports, building dams and setting up a diversified economy to meet the needs of its citizens. The growth rate (excluding the oil and gas sectors) is 6 per cent in Algeria.

My country has achieved most of the Millennium Development Goals set by the United Nations for 2015. For example, 93 per cent of the population have access to mains water, 98 per cent have access to electricity, and 43 per cent are connected to the natural gas supply. The school enrolment rate is 98 per cent, and life expectancy at birth exceeds 76 years.

In implementing our reforms, we have given particular attention to the issue of social security, as a safety valve to maintain social stability. As regards the promotion of social dialogue, I had the honour to share Algeria's experience in this respect with the Governing Body of the International Labour Office at its 309th Session in November 2010.

As regards housing, we built over 1 million housing units during the period 2005–09.

Under the leadership of President Bouteflika, Algeria has embarked on sweeping constitutional and legislative reforms with a view to strengthening the separation of powers and promoting the rule of law, freedom of the press, and political and trade union pluralism.

To conclude, we call the international community and international organizations, in particular the United Nations, to shoulder their full responsibility towards the defenceless Palestinian people, and towards the Palestinian workers, who are suffering acutely from the different forms of repression, blockade and siege inflicted by the occupation.

Original Chinese: Mr WANG (Worker, China)

We are gathered here at the start of the second decade of the twenty-first century for the 100th Session of the International Labour Conference and to envisage a new era of social justice. This event has a special significance. In his Report, the Director-General highlighted the important role of the ILO in boosting global sustainability and offered a package of insightful policy proposals setting the stage for the success of this session.

Since the First Session of the International Labour Conference held in October 1919, amid changes around the world, the ILO has dedicated itself to the improvement of the living and working conditions of people throughout the world, never tiring of its commitment to its objectives and purpose, and always mindful of its duty to set international labour policies and standards. It has also achieved a great deal in enhancing international cooperation, fostering common development, promoting economic growth and upholding equity and justice, thus winning worldwide acclaim from the international community.

At present, the deep effects of the international financial crisis have yet to wear off. Turning crisis into opportunities and achieving development is not just a shared aspiration of the working people, but also the historic mission of the ILO. I wish to offer the following proposals.

First, transforming the economic development pattern and achieving people-oriented sustainable development. Governments in the world should rely on cultivating talent and on scientific and technological innovation to achieve industrial transformation with the focus on the real economy. Trade unions should help raise workers' awareness of energy conservation, emission reduction and environmental protection, and encourage their initiative and creativity in promoting sustainable development. Enterprises should fulfil their social responsibility, develop and use new technologies, new materials and new industrial techniques to cut emissions so that society and the environment can develop in a coordinated manner.

Second, building the capacity of workers and achieving efficient growth on the basis of full employment. Governments should implement even more proactive employment policies, build a sound job training system and implement the Global Jobs Pact, and trade unions should show workers how to foster a concept of lifelong learning, offer skills training to all workers and guarantee workers' rights to employment and training. Enterprises should encourage workers to enhance capacity for technical innovation, increase input into skills training and provide intellectual support for efficient growth.

Third, improving the mechanism for social dialogue and building harmonious labour relationships in which all parties seek development and share the fruits of development. Governments should improve the fairness of wealth distribution and raise the level of social security so that the benefit of economic development can reach the majority of workers. Trade unions should promote social dialogue and tripartism, implement collective bargaining and boost workers' income and welfare. Enterprises should foster harmonious labour relations to ensure that workers' income growth corresponds to productivity growth, and create mechanisms where labour and management share what is produced.

Fourth, promoting international exchanges and cooperation between trade unions and in labour affairs, and leading the international labour movement on a track of democracy, harmony and win-win development. Trade unions should boost mutual understanding and cooperation to cope with global challenges. As an important platform for national and international trade union organizations to carry out cooperation, the ILO should increase its capacity and influence to promote tripartite cooperation and safeguard workers' rights.

The Chinese trade unions will, as always, stand behind the ILO's efforts to uphold social equity and justice and achieve decent work for all. We are ready to work with national, regional and international trade unions to keep the international labour movement moving forward on the paths of solidarity and cooperation.

Let us join hands and make a greater contribution to building a harmonious world of lasting peace and common prosperity.

During this 100th Session of the International Labour Conference, the theme of the Director-General's Report, *A new era of social justice*, prompts us to reflect on the original objectives and principles that drove the founders of the Organization to support the establishment of the ILO as a specialized agency in the United Nations family.

Despite the unfolding years and the vast advances that have been made globally in achieving better living and working standards, the principles and objectives expressed in the original ILO Constitution are still as relevant today as they were in 1919.

In his Report, the Director-General shares with us his vision of a world that needs a new era of social justice, inspired by a vision of sustainable development in which policy-making is guided by people's needs, fairness and care for our planet. Making this vision a practical reality presents significant challenges to member States and depends on our capacity to work constructively together, as well as having the will and conviction to make change happen.

In June 2009, in response to the then unfolding global economic crisis, the International Labour Organization adopted a Global Jobs Pact. The Pact urged measures to retain persons in employment, to sustain enterprises and to accelerate employment creation and job retention, combined with social protection systems, in particular for the most vulnerable cohorts. The challenge that this sets for trade unions, employers and governments is to translate the commitment into measures at national level in order to generate real jobs, sustainable incomes, and an ongoing contribution to economic recovery and a fair society.

Since that time, Ireland has, of course, been susceptible not only to the global recession visited on all countries, but also to an additional underlying crisis in our banking system of such magnitude that assistance from the European Union (EU) and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) has been necessary.

Our journey on the road to economic recovery has begun and will require the Government, working in collaboration with employee and employer representatives, to meet difficult issues head on. As a result of the EU-IMF programme, we have seen the introduction of unpopular but necessary austerity measures, including wage adjustments and reductions in employment-related entitlements in the public sector. These are designed to significantly reduce the cost of providing public services in an attempt to bring exchequer spending back to sustainable levels. Increased direct and indirect taxation measures are also necessary in order to address the fiscal imbalance. Stricter levels of regulation have been imposed on our commercial banks and structural changes have been imposed on them, involving mergers and downsizing measures. Relatively sheltered sectors of the economy, including professional services, will be subjected to greater competition and product/market reforms.

Job creation and retention is central to the Irish Government's economic recovery strategy. In May of this year, the Government announced a Jobs Initiative, with the intention of targeting resources at key sectors of the economy that can: assist in getting people back to work; provide opportunities for those who have lost their jobs to re-skill; and build

the confidence that will encourage consumers to spend.

Underpinning these actions is the realization that there is no adjustment as traumatic for any worker as the loss of a job.

The Irish Government has also announced its intention to reform the structures for wage setting at sectoral level to make the system fairer and more responsive to changed economic and labour market conditions.

These efforts at creating sustainable jobs to provide a fair wage and sustainable jobs in competitive markets will, of course, have to be built on and strengthened with additional measures to tackle the growing levels of unemployment, which currently stands at over 14 per cent of our active workforce. These initiatives are aimed at enabling Ireland to survive the worst phases of this global recession. They will also have at their core the principles of social justice, in keeping with the vision of the Director-General, for equitable sharing of the benefits of globalization, a regeneration of hope in our youth, and credibility in public and private policies and institutions.

It is a great honour for me as Minister holding the Labour portfolio in Suriname to speak to this highly distinguished gathering for the first time. I congratulate the International Labour Conference for the celebration of its centennial session; this Organization is highly appreciated and has been instrumental in facilitating opportunities for all in the socio-economic context.

The new Bouterse-Ameerali administration takes this opportunity to renew the Surinamese Government's commitment to the commendable work that has been achieved in several areas, with special emphasis on core labour human rights and social security. We totally agree that the Decent Work Agenda and a working ILO tripartism bring the possibility of better, more inclusive growth, of more peace, more equity and rights, less poverty and more stable development in society and all its sectors. It should therefore be mentioned that the new administration is making great efforts to achieve a high standard of decent work.

The new Government explicitly committed itself to the concept of decent work in the annual New Year's speech of the President of Suriname in the National Assembly. Decent work is considered to be the basis for social protection and the guarantee for a fair income for workers. The fact that the Decent Work Agenda has clearly been adopted in the general socio-economic policy has produced unprecedented attention and awareness on the part of both the workers' and employers' organizations, as well as of the civil society. A notable example was the lectures on decent work in relation to equality of treatment and sexual harassment, which were given to commemorate the 8 March International Women's Day, by the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the gender movement in Suriname, respectively.

For the first time, workers and employers took the initiative, in cooperation with the Ministry of Labour, to discuss the amendment of labour legislation in the light of decent work, in April 2011. In May, the Suriname Labour College organized a two-day seminar in collaboration with the ILO Subregional

Office for the Caribbean, to make workers' representatives aware of the concept of decent work.

I congratulate the Director-General for his excellent Report, *A new era of social justice*, in which he puts emphasis on the factors that hinder social justice, the driving force of this Organization. In the Global Report for 2011, *Equality at work: The continuing challenge*, mention is made of the fact that, despite positive advances in anti-discrimination legislation at the national level, the global and social crisis has led to a higher risk of discrimination against certain groups.

In order to tackle deficits that might be present in our current system, the Government intends to formulate and implement a Decent Work Country Programme, in cooperation with the social partners and with the assistance of the ILO Subregional Office for the Caribbean. There are some aspects with regard to equality of treatment of child labour, social security for all, labour-standards monitoring and the creation of jobs by the private sector which need some reform. The policy of the administration is to make workers aware of decent work at the stage of entry into the labour market.

The long-awaited list of forms of hazardous labour with regard to child labour and its worst forms was proclaimed in December 2010 under the State Decree on hazardous labour.

Within a few months after its inauguration, the new administration revived some dormant social dialogue structures such as tripartite dialogue, which enables the three constituents to discuss the general socio-economic situation at high level and with a broad participation. Furthermore, the tripartite Labour Advisory Board started working again after a long period of inactivity. Some weeks ago, the tripartite partners had their first session; they will soon prioritize issues of concern that need administrative and legislative measures, and will be advising the Minister.

Modernization of labour legislation will be accelerated in this government term. With great interest, we read in the Director-General's Report that the systematic deregulation of the labour market has not contributed to higher levels of investment in the real economy. In that regard, we will continue our efforts to finalize the submission of labour legislation to the legislative, which aims to regulate labour market actors.

In the spirit of the theme of the Director-General's Report, and the statement he made to the International Monetary and Financial Committee and Development Committee in April 2011, I join with the efforts made by the ILO to warn the international community that the lack of economic opportunity can lead to unproductive activities, political instability and even conflict, as we have seen in certain areas in the world.

Working people and those seeking productive employment are paying a high price for the crisis they did not cause. The ILO must continue to try and influence financial institutions and governments to build the foundations of a new efficient growth path, emphasizing the growth of people as well as the growth of GDP.

Governments should think about the income-led strategy, since there is a close correlation between gains in real income and the rate of investment relative to GDP. The ILO should continue efforts to emphasize the destructive effects of austerity measures on workers when financial institutions lucra-

tively engage in risky business, shifting major losses on to governments.

Social justice and sustainable peace are the aim of our Organization; this has been mentioned time and again, and the ILO is faced with new challenges in changed times. Labour ministries have adopted this goal of the ILO.

In conclusion, we once again pledge to stand by ILO values and principles, and to endorse the ILO in its efforts to make social justice a reality.

Ms SHULER (*Worker, United States*)

I am pleased to address you today on behalf of the American Federation of Labor–Congress of Industrial Organizations, our more than 12 million members, our President, Richard Trumka, and Executive Vice-President, Arlene Holt Baker.

I am proud to be here, at this ground-breaking moment in history, when this body is considering setting labour standards for some of the world's most vulnerable and exploited workers, namely domestic workers. This is what the ILO is all about – setting standards to improve the lives and working conditions of workers everywhere.

For too long, domestic workers have laboured in the shadows. However, this week, in this House, we will have the opportunity to recognize domestic workers as workers, with the dignity and respect that they deserve.

This is the one bright spot in an otherwise dire situation for workers in the global economy. Unemployment remains shockingly high, especially for young workers. How many of you know an unemployed young worker, perhaps even your own children? More than 80 million, or 13 per cent, of young people around the world are unemployed. In the United States, the rate stands at 18 per cent, and job prospects remain bleak.

However, these young workers are not just sitting back. They are another bright spot: with energy, creativity and great courage. They are leading the charge, to demand good jobs, a voice at work and a place at the table where decisions are made that impact our economies. They are giving strength and inspiration to us all.

Unfortunately, the global debate has not followed their lead. It continues to focus on reactionary plans to cut deficits, rather than ambitious visions to move towards shared prosperity. Government cut-backs threaten to pull the world's economies into a negative spiral. This would lead to tremendous loss and true pain, in the form of greater homelessness, hunger and the loss of hope.

Let us remember – working people did not cause the financial crisis or the great recession. Yet, working people are carrying its greatest burden, while too many of our leaders are embracing the same cruel policies, and those who caused the crisis continue to profit.

While the wealth gap in the United States may be worse than in Europe, we see the ugly proof that we are all part of the same global trend. As we see detailed in the Director-General's Report, inequality has risen to historic levels throughout the entire world. It is not enough for countries to stabilize their financial systems. We also have to address the real needs of regular working people around the world.

Governments also need to step up their efforts. At this year's G20 meeting, hosted by President Sarkozy, we will look to France's leadership to help

create the G20 Working Group on Employment and Social Protection that would include leaders from the fields of finance, labour and development. It is essential to establish this working group, in order to build a social pillar in the G20, and to take an important step towards addressing the social dimensions of globalization.

With jobs, we can achieve social justice. With jobs and protection for working people to form strong unions and bargain collectively for a better life, we can begin to tackle inequality.

Given the challenges before us, it is time to strengthen the ILO, and it is time to ensure that the Decent Work Agenda is integrated into the policies of other international institutions.

(Mr Hossu takes the Chair.)

Original Serbian: Mr ORBOVIĆ (Worker, Serbia)

On behalf of the workers of Serbia, it is my pleasure to address you at the 100th jubilee Session of the Conference. The fact that governments, employers and trade unions have been meeting constantly throughout the ILO's long history confirms both the necessity of cooperation and our mutual interests, especially in these difficult times that the world of work has been facing for the past three years.

The global economic crisis generated a domestic crisis in Serbia, resulting in a sensitive, disintegrating labour market. According to official records, in 2011 there are approximately 730,000 unemployed people. That number would reach a million if we counted those in temporary employment or working in "mini-jobs", bringing the unemployment rate in Serbia to more than 20 per cent. If we look at the poll carried out in accordance with ILO and Eurostat recommendations, the number of those dismissed as a result of bankruptcy or closure of enterprises has almost doubled in the last two years, with 226,470 people dismissed by October 2010. Our estimate is that every year, "a small city" of employees disappears. In this manner, the imbalance between supply and demand in the labour market has already threatened to make it disintegrate completely, while the poverty rate in Serbia has reached a record 9.2 per cent.

The topic of this year's session of the Conference is the implementation of the 1998 ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work and the 2008 ILO Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization, which, under the slogan "Building a future with decent work", retain their popularity. Unfortunately, the Conventions and Recommendations being discussed in this respect are not being applied. In a destabilized and disintegrating Serbian labour market, I emphasize the grave violations of the Social Security (Minimum Standards) Convention, 1952 (No. 102), the Employment Promotion and Protection against Unemployment Convention, 1988 (No. 168), the Human Resources Development Convention, 1975 (No. 142), and the Maintenance of Social Security Rights Recommendation, 1983 (No. 167). The fundamental rights to work, employment and decent wages are being violated, while non-payment of contributions for health care threatens to undermine the right to health.

In addition to these unfavourable trends, it has been announced that the amendment of Serbian labour regulations would involve further flexibility, which actually represents new forms of precarious work and causes fear and insecurity for employees.

Employment in "mini-jobs", lasting from one to several hours a week, or payment in vouchers, cannot be categorized as real employment, or as decent work.

Despite the enormous increase in the informal economy, from which workers, employers and the State all lose out, the Serbian Government, as part of its general rationalization of jobs, decided to reduce the number of inspections and inspectors, instead of intensifying and improving their work.

Not even the Revised European Social Charter, which was finally ratified in 2009 after a six-year delay, could bring relief to the world of work in Serbia, because it does not contain the right to collective appeal. Trade unions are thereby left without the option of submitting a collective appeal against any act contrary to workers' interests.

In such a situation, with extremely unfavourable economic and social trends, it is very difficult to represent workers' interests and to be reasonable and rational. However, even in this difficult situation, Serbia's trade unions, disregarding remarks and criticism, have pursued their aim of engaging in dialogue with employers and Government representatives in order to reach agreement on crucial development issues. The result is the social agreement concluded at the end of April 2011. We expect this agreement to be respected and we hope to find enough strength to look for solutions together, in the interests of the world of labour and decent work.

We must therefore join together without exception – trade unions, employers and governments – to talk and find solutions that will lead us to the future of decent work. Otherwise, the world will have no future at all.

Original Korean: Mr LEE (Worker, Republic of Korea)

It is an honour for me to address you on behalf of the 16 million workers of Korea at this historic 100th Session of the International Labour Conference. As stressed in the report of the Director-General, *A new era of social justice*, we have to redress the inefficient growth pattern that has increased inequality throughout the world over the last 30 years and open a new era of social justice. Especially, I extend my full support to the proposal that the ILO and the tripartite constituents build a new era where the benefits of globalization are shared equitably and the dignity of work is promoted and respected.

The task before us is to continue to work together to construct effective responses to this challenge through concerted efforts by the tripartite partners. However, it is deplorable that the labour situation in Korea continues to face a gloomy prospect.

The pro-business and anti-labour Lee Myong-bak administration of Korea is the only Government which has banned wage payments to full-time union officials by law and introduced a distorted time-off system which is completely different from that implemented in European countries. The Korean time-off system is an anti-union measure to prevent full-time union officials from conducting union activities, whereas the European system is to protect legitimate trade union activities.

The ILO has advised the Government of Korea on several occasions to the effect that the payment of union contributions to full-time union officials should not be an area for government interference or coercive legislation. However, the Korean Government has continued to ignore the ILO's recom-

mentation. Against this backdrop, the FKTU, together with the KCTU, is planning to launch a joint struggle to render the anti-union law ineffective.

Although the Korean Government has allowed union pluralism at enterprise level in the name of the protection of the right to organize, it has deprived minority unions and newly established unions of the right to bargain collectively and the right to take collective action. Labour laws which are meant to protect socially vulnerable groups, including workers, have now turned into employers' weapons, resulting in the total collapse of industrial relations.

Korean employers, academic circles and conservative media are no exception. All of them are surrendering to the pressure of the Lee Myung-bak dictatorial regime. They are attempting to justify illegitimate restrictions on the right to bargain collectively and take collective action by arbitrarily interpreting ILO Conventions in their own way, taking advantage of the fact that ILO Conventions are general concepts which can be universally applied to all countries.

This is the very reason why the Federation of Korean Trade Unions, which always respects social dialogue as a key value of the ILO, is determined to stage an all-out struggle against the Government. I believe that all the ILO's constituents honour social justice and dignity of work. I would like to take this opportunity to make an urgent appeal to you for strong solidarity in support of the Korean workers' struggle against the Lee Myung-bak dictatorial regime.

I have to express my deepest regret over the fact that the case of "comfort women" was again excluded from the list of individual cases in the Committee on the Application of Standards. Convention No. 29 on forced labour is one of the most important core Conventions. However, it has never been discussed for 16 years due to strong opposition by the Japanese Government and employers. I appeal to the ILO to continue its efforts in this area. By doing so, we can indeed move towards "a new era of social justice".

Last but not least, I express my grave concern at the fact that the Korean Government has detained ten Vietnamese migrant construction workers on charges of engaging in illegal strikes. However, their strike was to protect their own livelihood. I should like to conclude this speech by urging the Government of Korea to release the workers without delay and to protect the rights of all migrant workers.

Original Slovak: Mr MIHÁL (Minister of Labour, Social Affairs and Family, Slovakia)

I appreciate the tripartite composition of this Conference which enables representatives of Governments, Employers and Workers to negotiate, search for and adopt joint measures aimed at social justice and decent work.

The Government of the Slovak Republic has identified, as its top priority, the enhancement of the quality of life of its citizens and their standard of living, along with economic development and sustainable improvement of living standards for all the citizens of the Slovak Republic.

This will require responsible budgeting to reduce the budget deficit and a solution to the problem of an ageing population which Slovakia will face in the coming decades.

The main aim of the Government is to reduce the public finance deficit to below 3 per cent in 2013, so that Slovakia can meet its commitments towards the European Union stemming from the Stability and Growth Pact. We are gradually managing to achieve this aim.

Under the National Reform Programme, the Government is preparing the reform of the pension system, focusing on the financial sustainability of the system. We will change the calculation of the newly granted pensions and the way of indexing pensions. We will introduce an automatic increase in pensionable age based on median life expectancy, together with the recently introduced personal pension accounts. This will ensure the sustainability and stability of the pension system for the coming decades.

With respect to the European Union, Slovakia supports measures which accelerate the formation and liberalization of the single European market. It is, however, opposed to the increase in European regulations and bureaucracy. The Government of the Slovak Republic wants to preserve the sovereignty of the member States in respect of economic and social policies wherever it is in contradiction with the needs of the single European market. Slovakia supports European policies and measures which are geared to the long-term sustainability of public finances and responsible economic policies in individual Member States of the EU, such as the Stability and Growth Pact.

Allow me to call on the delegates to the Conference to act responsibly when they vote on the budget of the ILO. It is their political responsibility.

The top priority of the Government of Slovakia in the social era is to increase employment, and that means the creation of jobs as the most efficient means of raising people's income. However, the creation and retention of new jobs are inhibited by many factors, one of them being the inflexibility of the labour market.

That is why the Government is reforming the contribution system and amending the Labour Code, employment services and other legislation. The amendment of the Labour Code is currently in the final stage of the legislative procedure. Discussions with the social partners took place on the amendment of the Labour Code, which was also discussed in the National Economic and Social Council. Currently the Government is discussing the draft amendments.

The Government of the Slovak Republic recently requested the ILO for technical assistance in drafting the amendment of the Labour Code. Allow me to take this opportunity to express our gratitude for this technical assistance.

Original Farsi: Mr OTAREDIAN (Employer, Islamic Republic of Iran)

The past decade has seen increasing instability in global life, in the form of rising prices for energy and food, unanswered joblessness, and large numbers of internationally mobile refugees, all of which could still epitomize the ongoing global crisis and imbalances.

If there is going to be a new era for social justice, as per the title of the ILO Director-General's Report, there is a need for an overarching awareness that the global landscape is changing away from the old model dominated by the rich countries. Whatever else we learn from the crisis, this much is clear: in order to eliminate the world's social un-

fairness, global economic management can no longer afford to neglect the most vulnerable and disadvantaged.

In the context of inclusive development and social justice, poverty reduction is a key element in addressing social unfairness and correcting imbalances. We single out unstable and socially unacceptable unemployment levels around the world as the root cause of poverty and the most serious challenge facing global justice.

In order to achieve inclusive and sustainable growth, we believe social protection needs to be strengthened alongside economic policies to spread the benefits of growth to all segments of society. In my country, the Islamic Republic of Iran, the target-oriented subsidies plan, aimed at overhauling the country's economy by shelving energy and food subsidies, is one of the important measures taken by the Government in the economic sphere. Applying justice in the form of the fair distribution of subsidies between different strata of society with varying revenues is of key significance to the plan. We believe that the implementation of this great plan through tripartite dialogue could contribute to the achievement of decent work in the country.

In this context of global economic uncertainty, conflict and violence in the Middle East and North Africa are holding back global growth. In such circumstances, when everything is tainted with politics, the ILO, as a technical and non-political organization, must maintain its integrity and reliability. Along with other UN agencies, the ILO needs to set the foundation for a world free from intolerance and injustice, where the powerful are accountable and the vulnerable are protected, so that nobody can be regarded as a second-class citizen in terms of the enjoyment of human rights.

With vision, commitment and cooperative leadership, the world has the capacity and means to establish maximum justice within itself, in line with ILO priorities. We value the ILO campaign to break the recurring cycle of discrimination and injustice, while hoping for a dignified life for all around the world.

Let us establish a future with decent work for all.

Mr MOCANU (*Government, Romania*)

Allow me first to express my appreciation for the Director-General's Report, *A new era of social justice* and for the Global Report under the follow-up to the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work, *Equality at work: The continuing challenge*. Both Reports offer a possibility of evaluation, but also a solid benchmark for future work, marked by the pressing need to find effective ways to mitigate the effects of global crisis.

This year, the International Labour Organization is celebrating the 100th Session of the International Labour Conference and we are already looking ahead to 2019 when the Organization will be celebrating 100 years of existence.

The eight years until 2019 will be of the utmost importance and responsibility for the ILO, governments, trade unions and employers. It is time, more than ever, for teamwork within the ILO and international cooperation to result in effective responses to major global challenges.

Humanity needs social justice in the context of sustainable development and, therefore, we need to take a clear look at the people and their needs, to build a fair economy at the global level, to give

young people hope, to restore the credibility of policies and institutions and to promote decent work.

The tripartism of the Organization, its values and policy tools can change the world.

The Romanian Government shares the idea that recovery from the global crisis requires an approach from the decent work perspective. Decent work provides the possibility of reducing poverty and inequality. This must be an element of a global agenda for sustainable social and environmental development in the context of the importance that the ILO gives to tripartite dialogue.

Discrimination of any kind remains a worrying phenomenon with regard to access to employment; it is also of concern for the situation of migrant workers, the elderly, the low skilled, women, and young graduates seeking employment.

In the last two years, the Romanian Government has taken a number of measures to accelerate reform, reduce excessive budgetary spending, introduce budgetary restructuring and strengthen fiscal discipline, sometimes through difficult and unpopular social measures. The Government has thus succeeded in reducing the budgetary deficit and even avoiding serious shortfalls.

The financial and economic results of the last period, including coming out of recession, confirm the fairness of the measures that the Romanian Government has taken.

In the context of the national approach on flexicurity, structural reforms have been promoted through the adoption of laws that have structurally amended either labour law or social dialogue legislation and other aspects related to employment and social protection.

To meet the challenges in the medium and long term, the implementation of the structural reforms will increase labour productivity and competitiveness but also our capacity to create new jobs.

The application of these laws builds equity between different social groups, creates prerequisites for more effective spending on social assistance and ensures a fair wage system.

The Romanian Government is acting to maintain macroeconomic stability in order to attract financial flows by directing human resources towards the private sector.

The key element to the success of these government policies is the involvement of all social actors in these processes; this should be on the public agenda of both institutions and civil society.

Consistent with the fundamental values it promotes and which give it its essence, the ILO helped organize a tripartite meeting in Bucharest in January 2011. Tripartite discussions were held on the reforms for labour market flexibility, a more efficient and fair labour market, consistent labour legislation, and elements of balanced and sustainable economic growth to create new jobs.

I use this opportunity to acknowledge the constant effort of the ILO and its involvement in effectively supporting Romania.

Starting this year, in the field of employment, in the context of stabilization and economic growth, improved labour market performances are expected.

The International Labour Organization may, and should, play a major role in promoting its specific standards and values, especially in times of crisis. The Government of Romania has always supported ILO strategies: a fair globalization, poverty reduc-

tion, gender equality, the impact of international labour standards on development, and more constructive social dialogue.

Original Mongolian: Ms TUGSJARGAL (Minister of Social Welfare and Labour, Mongolia)

It is an honour for me on behalf of the Government of Mongolia to convey sincere greetings to all the delegates and guests participating in this Conference under the theme of building a future with decent work. I would like to emphasize that this 100th Session is unique for both its historical perspective and the substance of its discussions.

I welcome and support the key points made by the Director-General in his Report regarding a new era of social justice and the forward-looking policies that are suggested.

Decent work has been and should be our constant priority. The most important entry point to decent work is the creation of sufficient jobs for all. With deficits in employment, there are many more obstacles to the provision of decent wages, the full realization of fundamental principles and rights at work, and the promotion of social dialogue.

Two years ago at this time, we thoroughly discussed jobs deficits in the very context of the crisis and adopted the Global Jobs Pact. Therefore, we have committed to recovering from the crisis with greater employment outcomes. I would like to note that the tripartite constituents of Mongolia have been making efforts with the support of the ILO to implement the Global Jobs Pact at the national level. We organized a national employment conference in 2010 and identified key policy directions to increase and promote employment. As a result, the Government announced 2011 as a year of employment promotion. Within this framework, our Government has undertaken a number of concrete measures aimed at improving the legal and regulatory framework, promoting employment with economic and financial tools, and providing organizational support.

In 2011, for instance, the Government of Mongolia has significantly increased the national budget for infrastructure development and support to small and medium-sized enterprises. In addition, measures have been adopted to strengthen the national cashmere industry and improve its competitiveness. However, the number of decent jobs created was less than what we desired, owing to both external and internal factors.

First of all, the consequences of the crisis have not been fully dealt with and recovery is still fragile and vulnerable. For example, growth in the mining industry, a major contributor to the Mongolian economy, has been dependent on external factors including prices in the world market, while the agricultural sector, especially animal husbandry, has been dependent on weather conditions. I think that other developing and agricultural countries have also encountered the same challenges and difficulties.

In addition, there are many challenges, from financial to organizational, in promoting different forms of decent employment if the scale of household-based industries, self-employment and the informal economy in a country is significant. Today, therefore, we need more than ever to adopt international economic, financial and trade policies that are pro-employment and to strengthen our global action against climate change. Without such an integrated policy, from global to regional and subregional lev-

els, the path to decent work will be much longer. In other words, it is crucial that every country should find its own way of organizing its actions better, with a view to implementing the ILO Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization.

Deficits in employment result in failure to provide social protection for all women and men, especially in the form of income security through old age, disability and survivor's benefits. Unemployed persons and small business operators who are unable to afford social insurance contributions are usually outside the formal social security systems. This may mean that our old policy approach to employment-related social security is not fully compatible with new economic structures and approaches. In a nutshell, we cannot achieve social security for all only through social insurance.

Therefore, the Government of Mongolia is carefully considering improving and extending its social security system to all, linking gains in natural resources with the future security of our people.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the ILO for its technical assistance and support in this area. Within the informal economy the smaller enterprises find it more difficult to ensure that the workers' rights to organize and engage in collective bargaining are unrestricted and that effective and vibrant social dialogue is developed. For example, about 45 per cent of the active population in Mongolia are in the informal economy, self-employment and household-based activities, while 82 per cent of formal enterprises have ten or fewer employees. In this context, we really lack new approaches and techniques to protect the rights of such workers to organize and engage in collective bargaining, and hence to bring them into the existing social dialogue system. I think that other transitional and developing countries may have similar challenges in this respect. Therefore, it is still essential to follow up on the 1998 ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work, strengthening cooperation between national and international experts in order to address the challenges, and creating regular training forums and seminars in other countries.

Today, we all admit that the ILO Decent Work Agenda, the historic declarations and other policy documents have become the very foundation of national policies and government action all over the world to promote the well-being of working people and their families. We may not need to revise the contents of these documents in the next one or two decades, but we should focus more on how to make their core principles a reality, applying innovative approaches and methodologies based on partnership and cooperation.

Original Spanish: Ms GONZÁLEZ FERNÁNDEZ (Minister of Labour and Social Security, Cuba)

We are all compelled to adopt urgent measures in view of the current situation in the world of work and to set priority objectives for the ILO as a result of the complexity of the times in which we are living and the high degree of responsibility that we have.

Before the current crisis hit, the workers of the developing countries had already been suffering from exploitation, underdevelopment, social injustice and the plundering of their resources for centuries. The current crisis has exacerbated the conditions in which they live.

The ILO should be committed to finding specific solutions to the problems of unemployment and lack of social protection. It is not possible to remain unfazed by a world in which 205 million people are unemployed, 1.4 billion people live in abject poverty and billions of people go hungry. Significant changes are required. The remedies that have been put forward by the hegemonist superpowers have served only to perpetuate the institutions and practices that gave rise to the crisis, the consequences of which have fallen on workers and their families. This is particularly the case in developing countries, where food prices have tripled, water is scarce, one natural disaster follows another, and poverty, inequality and social exclusion are on the rise. These powers are responsible for solving their own internal problems as well as the serious problems that exist at the global level as a result of their policies.

In many parts of the world, the notion of development is a mere illusion and is lacking in a vision for the future. That is also true of decent work, labour rights and guarantees and social benefits. The rapacious and unfair international economic order continues and today, more than ever, donor countries dedicate exorbitant amounts of resources to conquering wars on the basis of aggressive interventionist doctrines against the developing countries with a view to plundering their resources.

It is necessary to strike realistic compromises and have recourse to international cooperation so that we can ensure that aid contributes effectively to boosting job creation, developing social security systems, establishing minimum wages, basic occupational safety and health services and policies integrated at the national level that will favour the elimination of the delicate situation of unemployment and exploitation.

The ILO, as a UN agency, can help with this by striving to bolster the resources dedicated to official development assistance. It also has an opportunity to exert an influence on States to ensure that they assume their responsibility to make employment and social protection a priority in their economic and social policies.

Cuba has recently concluded a period of popular consultation to update its economic model with a view to ensuring the continuity and irreversibility of socialism, promoting its economic development and raising the standard of living of its population.

Cuba will never have recourse to drastic solutions. We will never leave people unarmed against their fate in spite of the unfair economic, trade and financial embargo imposed on the country, which has even been intensified, despite the almost unanimous condemnation of the international community, which has been increasingly calling for its elimination for the past 19 years.

We shall continue fighting, alongside our brother nations in the developing countries, to transform the heritage of centuries of colonial rule. Side by side we will defend the right to economic integration to solve our problems. We will defend the right to international solidarity and to cooperation and exchange with other countries, in order to build a better world.

Original Spanish: Mr SANTA MARÍA (Government, Colombia)

First let me say how honoured I am to take part in the 100th Session of the International Labour Organization, together with delegates from the worker,

employer and government sectors, who form the essence of the tripartite model.

The Government of Colombia is determined and ready to promote policies that will bring about genuine social justice for Colombians.

Very few countries in the world have suffered, as Colombia has, from a scourge of violence for more than six decades. This situation has affected all citizens, regardless of their age, gender or social status.

Colombian society, which is steadfast in the face of its suffering, firmly committed to its institutions and looking forward to a future of prosperity and equality of the kind to which the current Government is committed, is calling for a model of social justice which will allow it to forget its former suffering and to look forward with optimism to the future.

We are convinced that, in order to achieve genuine social justice in Colombia, society must recognize the suffering of the victims and must be ready to pardon those responsible.

Last week, the Victims and Land Restitution Law was approved in Bogotá, in the presence of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, which will enable Colombia to overcome violence and to build a new fairer and more equal society. Truth, justice and reparation are the three fundamental pillars of this new law, making Colombia the first country in the world to adopt, without yet having fully overcome the criminal activities of illegal gangs, a comprehensive public policy helping 4 million victims of violence. It sends a clear message that the Government and the society of Colombia are committed to social justice.

Nevertheless, it is clear that social justice goes beyond truth, justice and reparation. The Government of President Juan Manuel Santos, voted in by more than 9 million Colombians, intends to strengthen its governance through a proposal for national unity and social dialogue involving the main and most representative political parties and civil society groups. The government of national unity, in its efforts to fight social injustice and inequality in order to put Colombia on the path to sustainable economic growth, has identified five driving forces for economic growth. These driving forces are aimed at creating and formalizing jobs as a sure way to encourage prosperity and equality and involve the sectors of agriculture, housing, infrastructure, mines and innovation.

Furthermore, and as part of this same approach to governance, we have signed a tripartite agreement with the involvement of leaders of national and international unions that is seen as being the best agreement that has been signed in the last 50 years. It builds on the agreement of 2006 and contains a number of fundamental points, such as: the creation of a Ministry of Labour; the appointment and training of 480 new labour inspectors to strengthen the system of inspection, supervision and control; a campaign against any form of labour intermediation that fails to recognize the labour rights of the workers or their right to comprehensive social security; the application of the penalty of imprisonment to those who in any way impede freedom of association; the strengthening of tripartite social dialogue; fighting impunity by increasing to 95 the number of judicial investigators that make up the teams investigating crimes against union leaders; increasing protection and safety for trade union leaders; and funding technical assistance programmes.

Also of great importance is the creation of 2.5 million jobs and the formalization of 500,000 jobs within the framework of the Formalization and Jobs Creation Act, which encourages the formalization of work and job creation.

Our Government is creating a system of trade unionism that is responsible and willing to make proposals and engage in dialogue, rather than protest, and that shares the common purpose of creating social justice for all. It has endeavoured to make progress with its labour agreement and firmly believes that through international cooperation it will continue to achieve the objectives of the agreement. We are convinced that Colombia has achieved a great deal in terms of respecting labour and trade union rights, and this is a source of great satisfaction to us. We trust that the international community and certain players in the national community will finally recognize this progress and will give it due attention. That way, we will be able to continue to work together to achieve far more ambitious objectives.

Original Montenegrin: Mr NUMANOVIĆ (Minister of Labour and Social Welfare, Montenegro)

Montenegro values the International Labour Conference highly, and it is truly a pleasure for me to have the opportunity to address you on behalf of the Government of Montenegro at this anniversary session. Just recently, Montenegro celebrated an important anniversary of its own: the fifth anniversary of the renewal of its independence.

Today, Montenegro is a member of numerous multilateral organizations, and our main foreign policy priorities are the promotion of good neighbourly relations, the promotion of bilateral cooperation, and integration into European and Euro-Atlantic structures. In December 2010, we were officially granted candidate status for European Union (EU) membership, and we are fully committed to meeting the seven key criteria, as a condition for the initiation of membership negotiations.

The Government of Montenegro is committed to internal reform and the promotion of fundamental European values, primarily human rights and the rule of law.

One of the basic elements that the authorities in Montenegro observe in developing our society is the establishment of the rule of law and respect for human rights. The doctrine of equal treatment and non-discrimination in employment, which is recognized in international legislation and in many national Constitutions and legal systems is incorporated in our legislation as well.

To that end, in terms of internationally accepted obligations, Montenegro has made progress in harmonizing its legislation, particularly with regard to promoting human rights in the area of labour and employment. We are aware that this is a long process, and one that should represent the basis of a just and prosperous society.

The Constitution of Montenegro, as our fundamental legal act, is based on the commitment that citizens of Montenegro should live in a country in which the fundamental values are freedom, peace, tolerance, respect for human rights and freedoms, multiculturalism, democracy and the rule of law.

Discrimination in the labour market and employment relations is prohibited by the Labour Act, which contains definitions of direct and indirect

discrimination and prohibits discrimination based on gender, birth, language, race, religion, colour, age, pregnancy, health, disability, marital status, sexual orientation, political or other conviction, social status, or other personal attributes against any person seeking employment or against an employee.

In accordance with the Act on Labour Inspection and the Act on Inspection Oversight, victims of discrimination may approach the labour inspectorate in defence of their rights.

In order to strengthen mechanisms for implementing anti-discrimination policies and to provide further protection for potential victims, in 2010 Montenegro adopted an Act prohibiting discrimination, which covers possible discrimination on any grounds, as mentioned in the Labour Act, but also goes beyond the labour market and industrial relations. As with European Council Directive 2000/43/EC of 29 June 2000, this Act prevents discrimination outside the sphere of labour, in the fields of social welfare, education, and access to goods and services. One of the most important and most radical changes that this Act has brought is the introduction of a new concept, in accordance with which, if discrimination is alleged, the burden of proof lies with the perpetrator, not the victim.

The Employment Act, which regulates all active and passive employment measures, is also based on the principle of anti-discrimination.

Montenegro's national employment strategy provides a set of targeted measures aimed at helping individuals at risk of social exclusion, especially members of the Roma population.

The Government of Montenegro intends to direct a significant part of its external financial assistance, including pre-accession assistance funds, towards employment and human resource development for target groups in an unfavourable position in the labour market.

The Act on vocational rehabilitation and employment of persons with disabilities represents an example of Montenegro's active policy of fully integrating disabled persons into society. The Act sets out specific measures and mechanisms aimed at encouraging employers to hire persons with disabilities. In order to protect persons with disabilities, an act prohibiting discrimination against persons with disabilities is in the process of adoption. It prohibits all forms of direct and indirect discrimination in terms of equal rights and obligations in proceedings before the authorities, use of facilities and areas in public use, provision of public services, health care, education and upbringing, employment, social and child protection, and other forms of discrimination.

Labour market policy in Montenegro is largely oriented towards providing assistance to members of any segment of society that is in an unfavourable position, and is based on the principle of anti-discrimination, including the prevention of discrimination with regard to employment and occupation.

In Montenegro, we are continuing to develop and promote social dialogue between the Government, employers and workers, and through the work of our Social Council we are contributing to an even higher quality of social dialogue. In addition, through the Agency for the Amicable Settlement of Labour Disputes, we have provided employees with a means of resolving labour disputes quickly and efficiently, without bringing legal proceedings.

We are fully committed to further development of the legal, political and economic system of our country, and, through the adoption of European standards and best practices, we hope to reaffirm our strategic goal – to join the European community of nations.

Mr BADR (*Government, Egypt, speaking on behalf of the Ministers of Labour and Social Affairs of the Non-Aligned Movement*)

The Ministers of Labour of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), convening during the 100th Session of the International Labour Conference, have discussed issues of interest and concern. The NAM labour ministers take note of the document entitled *A reform package to improve the functioning of the Governing Body* and recognize that a similar consultation process is urgently needed with a view to addressing the improvements required for the functioning of the International Labour Conference as well. In this regard, the Ministers consider that a well-structured consultation, carried out within the ILO, should always be strengthened so as to give all the parties concerned the space to operate effectively.

The NAM labour ministers would like to seize this opportunity to reaffirm the need to restructure the membership of the Governing Body of the ILO, in order to allow adequate representation by all regions and, in particular, by developing countries, which currently have a low level of representation in the Governing Body. The NAM labour ministers, considering that the 1986 amendment to the ILO Constitution meet this concern, renew the call to all member States that have not ratified the 1986 amendment to do so as a matter of priority.

As regards the Committee on the Application of Standards, the NAM labour ministers believe that there is a need for continued improvements to the working methods of the Committee with the objective of making them more transparent, democratic and responsive to the well-established principles of the ILO. They believe that by doing so, the Committee can raise confidence among the Members and fulfil its mandate appropriately. The NAM labour ministers believe that a balance in the list of individual cases should be the only guiding principle in the selection of these cases by the Committee. The current lack of balance between fundamental and technical Conventions, as the Conventions on freedom of association and collective bargaining comprise most of the cases examined, has to be addressed with a view to including more technical Conventions on the list.

The NAM labour ministers note the important role played by the International Labour Organization at the international level to deal with the repercussions of the global financial economic crisis, in particular, in providing assistance to developing and least developed countries. They reaffirm once again that such a role has to be mainstreamed with the role of the United Nations and global governance in dealing with international crises.

The NAM labour ministers welcome the discussions during the 100th Session of the International Labour Conference leading to a new labour standard for domestic workers and believe it should contribute to the improvement of their well-being. The establishment of this labour standard recognizes the contribution of domestic workers to the global economy and reflects a considerable step

forward in the protection of human rights and the promotion of decent work for these workers.

The NAM labour ministers believe that the new standard can enhance and support efforts at the national level to improve the regulation of domestic work in relation to employment and social protection, taking national economic, social and cultural circumstances into account. They stress the importance of granting protection to domestic workers, a group particularly vulnerable to exploitation in the light of the nature of their work, and stress the need to involve the social partners and other stakeholders to extend protection to migrant domestic workers.

The NAM labour ministers condemn the Israeli occupation of the Palestinian territories, as well as the occupied territories in the Syrian Golan, and express their rejection of Israeli policies. They welcome the Report prepared by the Director-General of the ILO on the situation of workers of the occupied Arab territories and express their deepest concern in respect of the predicament of the Palestinian and Syrian workers and employers. Their severely constrained economic activities, aggravated by physical and administrative restrictions, show no sign of improvement and systematically limit growth, affecting the livelihood of millions of innocent Palestinians imprisoned in their own homeland.

The NAM labour ministers welcome the reconciliation agreement signed in Cairo, Egypt, on 3 May 2011, between Fatah and Hamas as an outstanding political achievement that would unite the Palestinian national struggle for the establishment of the independent Palestinian State with East Jerusalem as its capital.

Lastly, the NAM labour ministers reaffirm their commitment to deepening and promoting the NAM positions in the context of the International Labour Organization, and, in that regard, agree to continue to hold their meetings during the International Labour Conference as a common means of advancing their interests and priorities.

Ms KNUPPERT (*Worker, Denmark*)

This is not only the 100th Session of the International Labour Conference, it is also the first time we have decided to include one of the most vulnerable groups of workers in the world, namely the 100 million domestic workers, most of whom are women involved in caring and cleaning on a global scale. We have a history in this House of explicitly excluding domestic workers from all other Conventions, and I am therefore extremely happy about the outcome achieved by the Committee on Domestic Workers.

It is the first time we have reached out to workers in the informal economy, and on the informal labour market. We owe a lot of thanks to trade unions and other organizations, which have created the momentum that led to not only the text of the Convention, but also to a Recommendation.

The message is clear, where there is a will, there is a way. This new instrument will help trade unions put pressure on their Governments, and I am confident that it will lead to better working conditions for millions of women.

Around the world, workers are trying to claim their basic rights to decent work and a decent life. In many countries, workers are being met with layoffs, violence and, in extreme cases, murder at the hands of governments, employers and businesses.

The global trends include governments not enforcing labour laws, a lack of support for the funding of inspection or protection, a lack of rights and the abuse of migrant labour. Across the Middle East, governments are trying to repress citizens engaged in trying to better their lives, in economic terms, through union representation, better wages and collective bargaining. Independent trade unions are essential to improving the living standards of workers across the globe.

For many years, we have seen repeated attempts to reduce levels of social protection. In response to the global crisis, it is important to understand that social protection can contribute to avoiding the effects of a deep economic depression, not only in case of unemployment, but also through the provision of pensions, health care and family benefits. ILO standards play a vital role in setting out the fundamental principles for a public, collective social security system, based on solidarity with regard to funding. Therefore, we regret that, despite a growing recognition of the importance of social security in times of crisis, social security schemes in many European countries have, once again, become the favourite target of programmes to adjust public finances, especially through austerity programmes.

We need sound governance of social security schemes in all countries, remembering the link to key ILO standards and the involvement of the social partners in social security policies and governance.

You cannot have a decent job or a decent life without social protection. We therefore support, and look forward to, the discussion next year.

I also welcome the conclusions of the Committee on Labour Administration.

Decent work and safe working environments are the cornerstones of any civilization, and public employment services and public labour inspections systems support them by enforcing labour standards. Now is the time for the provisions of labour law to apply equally to all workers, including those in the public sector and the informal economy. Tripartite social dialogue lies at the heart of the ILO, and I call on all governments to ensure that national tripartite committees are established to address problems regarding labour law enforcement and inspection, remembering that effective tripartite cooperation requires freedom of association.

My Government is about to ratify the Maritime Labour Convention, 2006, which we support, despite unresolved problems, at national level, with regard to the Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention, 1948 (No. 87), the Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining Convention, 1949 (No. 98), and the Danish International Ships Register.

We therefore look forward, later this year, to the report from our Government to the Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations on this matter.

The ILO must continue its important efforts to obtain better working conditions and social justice for millions of workers around the world.

Ms ISKAKOVA (*Government, Kyrgyzstan*)

Since joining the ILO in 1992, the Kyrgyz Republic has undertaken obligations to comply with the ILO Constitution and to implement international Conventions. From the time it joined until now, the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic has ratified 53 ILO Conventions, including such fundamental ones

as: the Forced Labour Convention, 1930 (No. 29); the Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention, 1948 (No. 87); the Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining Convention, 1949 (No. 98); the Equal Remuneration Convention, 1951 (No. 100); the Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention, 1958 (No. 111); the Termination of Employment Convention, 1982 (No. 158); and the Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182).

In Kyrgyzstan, the Ministry of Labour, Employment and Migration interacts directly with the ILO, and it has pioneered the development of a system of social partnership. Conventions Nos 87, 98, 154 and 144 have played a major role in the formation and development of trilateral cooperation and collective bargaining. Such rights and principles as freedom of association, pluralism and the participation of stakeholders in decision-making concerning them have become fundamental in the laws of the Kyrgyz Republic; social partnership prevails in the field of social and labour relations, and collective agreements.

The Kyrgyz Republic has created a layered system of social partnership, which takes into account local, regional and national interests and priorities through the conclusion, at various levels, of general, industry, regional and collective agreements. The coordination of budgets and the establishment of budgetary obligations are carried out by the Republican Tripartite Commission on the Regulation of Social and Labour Relations, within the framework of technical cooperation and advisory services. The ILO Moscow Office has assisted the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection of the Kyrgyz Republic in examining draft laws on social partnership in the field of social and labour relations and on collective agreements.

Experts in the Kyrgyz Republic have had the opportunity to undergo modular training on vocational education, labour inspection and the labour market; seminars have also been held on national labour legislation pertaining to child labour, and training in the basics of entrepreneurship and youth employment. Such events as seminars on child labour and youth employment were held with the participation of the social partners in the Asian region. Furthermore, workshops on the development of the initial employment programme and the national programme on the protection of agricultural labour are organized in participation with the Ministry of Labour. The specialists of the Ministry of Labour provide advice on HIV/AIDS in the workplace, gender inequality and human trafficking.

In order to further reform the system of social partnership in the Kyrgyz Republic and to develop cooperation within the framework of the Decent Work Country Programme, the Kyrgyz Government hopes that the ILO will provide technical cooperation to address the following issues: the monitoring of the social partnership system in the country; the examination of ways in which the trade unions and employers, together with the Government, can promote the Kyrgyz Republic's skills development and entrepreneurial education for small and medium-sized businesses; the training of specialists, taking into consideration international experience on development and social dialogue at all levels; the study of experiences in the field of labour relations and countries with advanced economies; and the

training of experts responsible for implementing Government policy.

The Kyrgyz Republic looks forward to further joint fruitful cooperation with such an authoritative party as the International Labour Organization, within the new Decent Work Country Programme 2011–20 framework.

Original Spanish: Mr CARBONE (Worker, Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela)

I speak on behalf of the National Workers' Union of Venezuela; today we are fighting to build a new world with social justice on behalf of the World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU).

As we talk about a new era of social justice, we should consider the major opportunity we have to achieve it, given that, almost 100 years after the foundation of the ILO and after 100 sessions International Labour Conference, the global labour situation is very far from reaching the social justice which is in the Preamble to the Constitution of this institution.

The Director-General, in his Report, talks about the need for courage, convictions, ability and will power and our capacity to work together and with others to pave the way for this new era.

We also need to make progress with the plurality that should exist in the different bodies of this house. It is useful to remember the popular saying, "practice what you preach". It is very difficult to establish social justice elsewhere in the world when in this House we face situations of injustice and inequality with regard to participation in the leadership of this Organization.

At the 16th Congress of the WFTU, which was held in Athens, Greece, we stressed the pressing need to democratize the ILO. We believe that this is a suggestion that should be seriously considered to bolster the moral standing which this House should have, with a view to achieving the much-coveted social justice.

The ILO, to achieve true social justice, must be plural, unitary and more democratic, eliminating its increasing hegemony, and balancing the representation of the social partners, in accordance with current trends that exist and which are palpable realities, but are excluded from this house.

On 7 September last year, WFTU and its organizations held a global protest under the slogan, "We will not pay for their crisis".

We take it as very positive that the Report of the Director-General agrees with our position. I will quote what he said in his Report: "In social terms it means that those working women and men, public servants, pensioners and small enterprises, which had no responsibility for the financial crash, are paying the highest personal cost and nowhere more than for people in those countries facing the pressure of financial markets on sovereign debt."

The crises which are currently being experienced in various countries are a direct result of these measures, in particular with regard to providing food for the people.

One of the main factors in the increase in food prices is financial speculation and that is because food is considered a commodity and is traded on futures markets.

This should lead business leaders to think about their role as social partners to achieve social justice because we cannot make progress while transna-

tional companies continue to benefit by capitalizing and speculating on people's hunger.

To achieve social justice, we also need a great deal of political will. In state budgets, the social issue, food, should take precedence over military spending; human issues should come before profits. War is a scourge that continues to block our path towards our goals.

Talking about decent work in a country in peace is much easier than doing so in places where bombs destroy infrastructure and damage the self-determination of the people, all for the hidden purpose of accessing the natural resources of a country.

In many Latin American countries, we have decided to opt for a different type of government. We have been moving towards change in political, social and economic terms. Achieving the fair aspirations of workers and peoples is a fundamental part of being a human being. That is the most obvious demonstration of the failure of the capitalist model.

In this regard, the National Workers' Union of Venezuela rejects the recent embargo measures announced by spokespersons for the United States Department of State against the main company in our country, the Venezuelan Oil Company (PDVSA), as nothing more than an attempt to undermine the sovereignty of our country.

The workers of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela are moving towards the building of this other possible world. We are convinced that if we continue with the same methods of the international financial bodies, we will continue seeing the same results. This is why we support a change to new geopolitics and a new vision of the world that is based on social justice.

Finally, I call upon governments and stakeholders of the world to turn their eyes to the south; thanks to our resistance and self-determination, those of us who yesterday were exploited can today say to the workers of the world that it is possible to find justice; it is possible to achieve equality; it is possible to close the wage gap between men and women; it is possible to provide education for all as a means for freedom; it is possible to achieve universal social protection. Let us not continue using the methods of old; let us change the system.

Original Portuguese: Mr ANTÓNIO CÓ (Worker, Guinea-Bissau)

Allow me, on behalf of the workers of Guinea-Bissau to thank everyone for their attendance at and appreciation of this 100th Session of the International Labour Conference.

Even at the beginning of our national struggle for liberation, the workers of Guinea-Bissau had freedom of association, which took shape in the 1980s with the approval and publication in the *Official Gazette* of Acts 8, 9 and 10, on freedom of association, the right to strike and civil requisition respectively.

There are two trade union confederations in Guinea-Bissau: the National Union of Workers and the General Confederation of Independent Trade Unions. They monitor the labour situation of about 80 per cent of those employed in the public and private sectors, and are therefore responsible for providing them with the best possible atmosphere for pursuing their activities.

In Guinea-Bissau, in view of poor human development indicators such as illiteracy, the rate of absolute poverty and the low level of access to basic

health care, which are the result of successive political and military crises, AIDS and sexually transmitted diseases still present a serious threat to public health and a considerable challenge to fighting poverty and promoting development.

At the same time, the serious and cyclical political and social instability that the country has experienced has resulted in problems for enterprises, an unfavourable climate for business and investment, and difficulties in implementing development projects, all of which greatly affects both the country's workforce and the pursuit of the concept of decent work.

All these factors have directly contributed to the breakdown of the nuclear family, the very basis of society, driving its members towards risk behaviours such as paedophilia, prostitution and abuse. Today, there is a very strong correlation between rates of infection, risk behaviours and the workplace, and tackling this problem is an important strategy in fighting this scourge.

For the ILO, work is the basic tool for promoting poverty reduction, democratic government and countries' development, and not just any work but decent work, meaning decently remunerated work carried out in conditions of freedom, equity and security, free from all forms of discrimination – work that can ensure a decent life for all those who make a living from their work. The concept of decent work has four basic pillars: principles and fundamental rights at work; the creation of more and better jobs; the extension of social protection; and social dialogue. The question of equity cuts across all these pillars. In other words, equity is part of the strategy of decent work.

The various forms of discrimination, particularly on grounds of gender and age, are associated with the phenomena of social exclusion that give rise to and perpetuate poverty. They are responsible for the superposition of several forms of vulnerability and for creating additional barriers, so that people and groups who are discriminated against cannot overcome poverty. This is reflected in the labour market, where women are at a disadvantage.

Much the same as work in general, domestic work in Guinea-Bissau has enormous shortcomings in almost all respects. No category of worker is subject to such clear discrimination as domestic workers, most of whom are women. Domestic work is the most common occupation for women; it is frequently a way into the labour market for young people and older female workers, both those entering the labour market for the first time and those returning after a period of inactivity.

Women domestic workers are generally maids, cooks, housekeepers, nannies, laundry-maids, cleaners and caregivers to the elderly. In other words, they deal in services that concern the home. Male domestic workers are generally security guards, private drivers, gardeners or caretakers, if their workplace is not profit-making.

Living in people's homes creates an ambiguity in labour relations, as professional and private roles become confused.

However, we see, unfortunately, that in Guinea-Bissau this is a responsibility that has not been taken on sufficiently by the Government. Indeed, there is still no legal provision to protect female domestic workers, but we hope that the new labour code, which should be approved soon, will include an article for this purpose.

As a member organization of WFTU, we want to see a democratic, inclusive and pluralist ILO, in which the various trends within the global trade union movement can find a forum for representation. We wish to draw attention to certain inconsistencies within the ILO, and to the fact that its fundamental values must be respected within the ILO, its organizational units and the Workers' group itself.

Mr MURARKA (*Employer, Nepal*)

The world business environment is going through change at a phenomenal speed. Sustaining business, generating employment, improving working conditions and ensuring better quality of life are the challenges faced by all of us. It is only with the combined effort of employers, unions, workers and government, nationally and internationally, that we can meet these challenges, and the International Labour Conference provides us with a unique opportunity to combine our efforts and design appropriate strategies and policies.

We are yet to emerge from the negative impact of the world financial crisis. It is a pity that less developed countries such as Nepal have been adversely affected by a crisis created not by us but by somebody else. In our part of the world, where businesses do not have the necessary labour market flexibility and the State does not provide the required support system, the impact has been more severe.

The sustainable growth of the economy has remained one of the crucial challenges for us. Nepal, as we all know, is passing through a rough phase of transition. The focus of the State has been primarily on the drafting of the new Constitution and the continuation of the peace process.

The participation of interest groups has gone through the roof at a time when law enforcement has become very weak. The politicization of almost everything is having a serious negative impact on the industrial climate. Business has suffered the most. Additional jobs are not being created. Our immediate concern is to create a business environment that is conducive to growth, with industrial peace, where everybody abides by the agreements and the law of the land.

The employers of Nepal are working closely with trade unions and the Government to create good conditions in the business environment. We feel strongly that enforcement of the law and of collective agreements, with due compensation for losses caused by unlawful activities, is absolutely necessary for industrial peace.

We have been promoting social dialogue at all levels and we are tackling legislative reform with the support of ILO.

Recently the employers' and workers' organizations reached an historical agreement which should not only ensure a positive business climate but improve the welfare of the workers as well. The challenge now is for both sides to abide by the agreement and for no organization or other force to subvert it.

The Government, we find, does not take cognizance of the agreement between major trade unions and national employers' organizations and decides on its own.

The employers of Nepal are for developing sustainable enterprises with green jobs and creating new decent jobs, with the objective of decreasing poverty and promoting economic growth.

We have been calling all social partners to come together for the growth of business and the improvement of the employment and working environment.

I am not going to go into detail about industrial relations in Nepal. Each of our delegations will shed its light on this aspect.

Our primary concern is to ensure the expansion of economic activities and durable industrial peace in order to sustain employment and employment creation. We all know that a sizeable portion of Nepalese youth cannot find employment opportunities inside the country. The employers' organization of Nepal has therefore been working with the Government to create opportunities for youth through self-employment programmes.

Many of our concerns may be different because of our country's specific conditions and level of socio-economic development, but there are many common issues that we are all facing.

We all need to develop a consensus to make a joint effort to address these issues. I would like to request the ILO to come up with specific programmes for countries like Nepal that would help in addressing the issues and concerns faced by its trade unions and business organizations.

Original Portuguese: Mr VIAGE (Worker, Angola)

We would like to extend a very warm greeting to all those present and, in particular, the Director-General and all the technical staff of the ILO, for the great sense of duty that they have demonstrated in pursuing their objectives.

We would like to extend these greetings to all the member States and congratulate them on the importance that they give to this labour forum through the adoption, ratification and implementation, internally and nationally, of the deliberations of the Conferences.

At this 100th Session of the International Labour Conference, the National Union of Angolan Workers (UNTA) wishes to pay a sincere and significant tribute to the predecessors of the ILO, certain that the workers remain loyal to the maxim that "universal and lasting peace can be established only if it is based upon social justice".

Angolans have a particular understanding of the meaning of peace. It is the greatest achievement for citizens, for their well-being.

With the peace that was achieved in 2002, economic, fiscal and social stability was achieved and

it was possible to conclude the constitutional process that was initiated in 1991. In February 2010, the Constitution of the Republic was approved, enshrining the fundamental duties of all citizens.

Thus, the economic, social and cultural rights and duties of citizens are enshrined in the Constitution and it is up to the State to ensure the right to work with equal opportunity in choosing professions and the duty to provide just compensation to workers when they are dismissed unfairly.

In legal terms, the right to work and social justice are challenges for the State. Any strategy that is adopted must necessarily respect freedom of association and the right to consultation.

Angola enjoys very economically favourable natural conditions that can be transformed into material wealth for the well-being of its citizens.

The constitutional economic standards and the public policies promoted by the Government are designed with this end in mind and there are signs of rapid growth of the economic indicators.

For this reason, the trade unions are campaigning for sustainable economic measures that will produce more jobs and income that will meet the people's needs in terms of food, health, education, housing, water, electric light, clothing, shoes, access to education, transport and social security.

A similar approach is adopted for social justice, with the State being responsible for a fiscal policy that will ensure justice, equity and solidarity in all sectors of national life and the removal of obstacles of an economic, social and cultural nature that prevent real equality from being achieved between citizens.

UNTA is one of the institutions at work in the field of social consultation and good results have been achieved. Nevertheless, it considers that these mechanisms need to be improved upon, particularly at the level of local authorities, and at the business level because social dialogue is almost inexistent. More work needs to be done to ensure that laws are respected and economic democracy is strengthened as a result.

As in the past, trade unions will call on the public institutions, in particular the bodies responsible for labour justice and fiscal administration, social protection, healthcare, technical and vocational training, to ensure that the law is respected and that all citizens receive equal treatment.

(The Conference adjourned at 8.10 p.m.)

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